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Pm's Lunch With Conservationists

ENVIRONMENTAL
AFFAIRS

OCTOBER 1985

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26.11.85.							
PREM 19/1476							

SUBJECT
cc Master.



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

26 November 1985

PRIME MINISTER'S LUNCH WITH CONSERVATIONISTS ON 25 NOVEMBER

I attach a record of yesterday's lunch. I have imposed some, but not much, structure on the discussion which ranged far and wide and returned to the same track on several occasions. I think the note however records the main points made by each of the participants.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Robert Gordon (Scottish Office), Colin Williams (Welsh Office), Ivor Llewelyn (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food), Leigh Lewis (Department of Employment), Mike Bailey (Mr. Waldegrave's office, Department of the Environment) and Barbara Jones (Mrs. Rumbold's office, Department of the Environment).

(Mark Addison)

Robin Young, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

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RECORD OF THE LUNCH WITH CONSERVATIONISTS HELD AT
DOWNING STREET ON 25 NOVEMBER 1985

Present:

Prime Minister

Sir Derek Barber, Chairman, Countryside Commission

Mr. William Wilkinson, Chairman, Nature Conservancy
Council

The Viscount Blakenham, Chairman of Council, RSPB,

Mr. Ian Branton, Director and Secretary, British Trust
for Conservation Volunteers

Mr. Tom Burke, Director, Green Alliance

Sir Arthur Norman, Centre for Economic and Environmental
Development

Secretary of State for the Environment

Mr. William Waldegrave

Mrs. Angela Rumbold

Mr. Hartley Booth

Mr. Mark Addison

Sir Derek Barber opened the discussion. He believed the prospect of a major change in land use was a key conservation issue at present. Up to six million acres, 40 per cent of lowland England and Wales, could be expected to come out of food production over the next 10-15 years. There needed to be a wider debate about how this problem should be addressed. Sir Arthur Norman agreed. The Government ought to have a clear policy on land use.

The Prime Minister noted that conservationists in the past had complained that the CAP was bringing more land into agricultural use; now some seemed to be complaining that the reverse was happening. They could not have it both ways. She pointed out that while the UK, under the influence of the CAP, might be producing surplus food, we were importing enormous amounts of timber. Forestation might therefore offer a possible use for land being freed from food production.

Sir Arthur Norman believed that Government policy on conservation should not merely respond to difficulties but adopt a more active role. The Government had failed to try and foresee the problems, for instance, arising from the impact of 20 million combustion engines on the environment. Planning and foresight was in the country's wider interest; conservation brought with it economic benefits too.

The Prime Minister said that the Government's record on conservation was a good one. No Government had done more. But she did not think the answer was for the Government to develop a strategy or plan to be imposed from the centre. After all, where the planning had been most intense - the CAP was a good example - the difficulties were often greatest. The important point was for Government to develop a framework within which farmers could adapt to change. Mrs. Rumbold agreed. History showed that plans based on today's analysis would soon get out of touch with tomorrow's problems.

Viscount Blakenham accepted that it was in principle undesirable to pay farmers not to plough up marshland, cut down forests, root up hedges and so on. But if this was the only way of preserving traditional and valuable aspects of the countryside, it was a price worth paying. The Prime Minister noted the possibility that such grants, however, could prompt farmers to threaten the very developments they were designed to inhibit. Mr. Waldegrave pointed to the practical difficulties of achieving the same objective by specific prohibitions. He also noted that the payment of such grants, eg, at Halvergate, also directly encouraged good land management; that was a valuable development.

Sir Derek Barber believed the resources currently going into agriculture could be better deployed. Mr. Burke agreed that less should be spent on price support and more on encouraging prudent land use. The Prime Minister said the Government had already had some success in controlling prices in Europe, despite intense opposition from the Germans. It was not good enough to blame farmers for reacting as they had

to economic pressures. The key question was how the smaller farmer could be helped to cope with any reduction in prices. Dealing in generalities did not help. The practical problems had to be addressed. The Secretary of State agreed that it was the farmer with, say, 120 acres in the West Country with whom the Government needed to be most concerned. The larger farmers would be able to look after themselves. But the smaller farmers, with say a modest dairy quota, often the backbone of their local communities, were the most vulnerable to change. Many already tried hard to support themselves through activities outside farming, e.g. holiday lets.

Mr. Burke accepted that difficult choices needed to be made. Some farmers might not be able to continue. But they could be helped to adapt. Tourism was an important way of supporting environmental conservation; the pressure on the most popular sites could be reduced as new, non traditional centres began to develop their tourist potential.

Mr. Ian Branton believed that if Government, environmentalists, voluntary bodies and the MSC could join together, an effective plan of action could be developed. Farmers were willing to cooperate; environmentalists were keen to help; voluntary bodies were ready to expand; and unemployed people provide a ready resource. This was a rich mixture and it should be used to the full. The voluntary sector was already making a massive contribution to conservation work; some 8 million man-days worked in a year. There was however a need to change some of the rules which at present inhibited the voluntary sector's contribution to conservation. For instance, restricting MSC contracts to one year only created uncertainty and discouraged the best people from joining schemes. Quality was all important.

The Secretary of State said there was a need to encourage the re-introduction of basic rural skills which were in danger of being lost forever. This would help conserve the rural environment, provide jobs and keep alive an important tradition. The voluntary bodies had a key part to play in

providing the training.

Viscount Blakenham accepted that resources which could be devoted to conservation were unlikely to increase. But they could be more fruitfully used to pump-prime new bodies and work. Mr. Wilkinson stressed the importance of Ministers and officials at all levels, in all departments, taking an active interest in conservation, being willing to work closely with conservationists, and helping them get their message across.

Mr. Burke thought that industry could do more in the conservation field; he noted that Mr. Waldegrave had done a good deal to encourage them already. Mr. Burke thought it would be helpful if the Prime Minister would consider making a major speech on the environment. The Prime Minister explained that her speeches generally had to go wider than one subject alone. She thought there was little to be gained by blaming the industry and farmers for short-comings in the conservation area. It was industry which provided the resources which were already being channelled back into environmental work. The key need was to get the message over to the public that environmental protection was not somebody else's concern. For instance, the major litter problem on motorways and main roads and in city centres affected every one. The Government needed to consider how that problem could best be tackled.

Sir Arthur Norman raised briefly a number of international conservation matters. It was vital that UK aid to overseas countries should be invested in environmentally sensible ways.

The Prime Minister closed the discussion by thanking all those present for the work they did in the cause of conservation and for their contribution to the discussion. There was much to be done and the task was complicated, particularly so far as the rural environment was concerned. But rhetoric was not enough; conservationists had to come up with specific practical ideas. The Secretary of State said he would consider further the points which had been made at the

lunch. He and his colleagues would bear them in mind as the Government continued to give thought to conservation issues.

MARK ADDISON

26 November 1985

PRIME MINISTER

CONSERVATION LUNCH: 25 NOVEMBER

Your lunch on Monday is with six leading figures from the conservation world:

Sir Derek Barber, Chairman, Countryside Commission
Mr William Wilkinson, Chairman, Nature Conservancy Council
The Viscount Blakenham, Chairman of Council, RSPB,
Mr. Ian Branton, Director and Secretary, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
Mr. Tom Burke, Director, Green Alliance
Sir Arthur Norman, Centre for Economic and Environmental Development

The Environment Secretary, William Waldegrave and Angela Rumbold will also be present. The seating plan is at Flag A together with short notes about each of the outsiders coming.

My letter of invitation indicates the main topics you will probably wish to have discussed at the lunch:

(i) key environmental issues and the Government's response;

(ii) land use (and particularly the impact of CAP reform, which Sir Derek Barber has particularly said he would like to discuss);

(iii) the role of the voluntary sector;

(iv) the urban environment.

The attached briefing consists of:

Flag B, Hartley Booth's note;

Flag C, briefing from the DOE;

Flag D, a note from Nick Owen on the CAP/land use issues;

Flag E, a letter from the Secretary of State for Agriculture reminding you of a paper he submitted recently which I am sure you will remember. He notes that this has not been seen by DOE Ministers.

You may wish towards the end of the lunch to have a word about responding to press enquiries about it. You could indicate ~~with~~ ^{general} the line you will be taking: that you were very glad you were able to meet with a number of key figures in the conservation field to discuss their concerns, and to listen to their views about how Government policy is contributing to conservation, and where improvements might be looked for; that the Government is fully committed to the cause of conserving our heritage and environment and taking specific steps to protect it where necessary; and that it believes there need be no conflict between achieving this and at the same time encouraging economic development.

MEA

MARK ADDISON

22 November 1985

CONSERVATION LUNCH, 25 NOVEMBER 1985

General Background

Six figures from the world of green policies have been invited to meet you to give you a flavour of their current views. It is the contention of William Waldegrave that these figures can help this Government, either directly themselves or by illustrating certain important public attitudes. So, although there is an SDP parliamentary candidate (Tom Burke) among the six it is expected that you will find all of them congenial, helpful and useful. There is a small caveat beside Sir Arthur Norman. The UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development started with a great flourish in 1980 with great expectations. It is yet only at ground base in its attempt to bring together the economic and the environmental world.

Politics

This year, the Conservative Party lost considerable ground on the South Coast, southern and western counties in the county council election, because of forceful presentation by environmental groups on conservation issues. The Alliance sees green issues as an area where they will find voters. You will recall our discussion on green belt. Fortunately, this Government can pray in aid of the good record of Conservative

Governments of the past - about 60% of all legislation on the environment has been put through by Conservatives. No-one need make us apologise!

Public Concern

If rural pastimes such as angling (7 million anglers) are added to the bird fanciers (RSPB has 450,000 members) and the National Trust members (1 million), and the pure lobbyists such as the Council for the Protection for Rural England (35,000 members) and the influential Green Alliance (only 400 members), then those directly interested in the environment tot up considerably. These should be added to the traditional environmentalists, the farmers (200 of these plus 400,000 in the agricultural sector) and those who cash in on the environment, namely, the tourist industry (950,000 employed and turnover of 13 billion per year). On top of that, there is a pollution clean-up industry, together with the Government inspectors and professional environmental workers.

Jobs and Conservation

The CBI recently recommended that "tourism depends for much of its resource base on public investment in conserving the environment and the natural heritage". In addition to the lucrative tourist industry and agriculture itself, there is also the growing anti-pollution business. This is now represented by small, medium and large business. We have supported the Department of Environment in plans to link the

market place and the reputation of the Government in conservation, by encouraging a major International Fair in the European Year of the Environment in 1987. This Fair may be mentioned by William Waldegrave, and is the sort of thing that Sir Arthur Norman ought to be doing - but it isn't! You will probably appreciate the splendid work that Colonel Branton does with his conservation helpers who voluntarily go about cleaning ponds and ditches! (Voluntary - but with the aid of Government money - £100,000.)

Likely Subjects of Conversation

I have spoken to one of the guests (Tom Burke) who appears to have spoken to nearly all the others who are attending. He says that there are four likely subjects to be discussed under the general steer given by your letter of invitation.

1. The future use of land coming out of production as a result of alleged future wind-down of the CAP.
2. The role of volunteering in the environmental sector - possibilities and probabilities.
3. The proposal by the Department of Environment that the Pollution Inspectorates be amalgamated.
4. What ought to happen to improve conservation and cleaning up of urban areas.

I expand these four as follows:

1. Nicholas Owen has done a brief which will be attached by the Private Office to this note. William Waldegrave is keen that Government continues its posture that you adopted last January, namely, that grants to farmers to stop harming the environment should be kept to an absolute minimum (Halvergate) and that instead, landscape conservation orders be used. Whether fiscal incentives to environmental responsibility in the countryside are useful, may be touched upon. Some research is being done on this matter. No final view of fiscal incentives has been reached. We are sceptical.
2. The role of volunteering in the present financial year of 1985/6. DoE provided £1.5 million in grants to the voluntary sector in the conservation field (see annex). Some of this went through MSC. We believe there are infinite possibilities, confirmed by our visit to the CATs, for young people to be involved in cleaning up the environment. A dramatic and splendid gesture would be made if you invited a few to do some extra clean-up work in ponds or ditches at Chequers!(?)
3. The amalgamation of the Pollution Inspectorate. This is mentioned in the DoE brief. It is a good idea and is liked by ecologists and conservationists because it is thought the present arrangements are slack on pollution! Hopefully, this practical administrative point will not

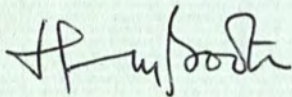
take up too much of the conversation. There is an internal tussle between Departments on this. The Health and Safety Executive is loth to let DoE have the Inspectorates. The relevant sections are fourfold. (HM Industrial Air Pollution - the Radio Chemical and the Hazardous Waste Inspectorates, and the DoE scientists and engineers engaged in pollution work.)

4. Urban conservation. Ever since Blake wrote of satanic mills 200 years ago, industrialisation has been seen as a cause of pollution. Disraeli instigated the Alkali Inspectorate. Between the wars, urban sprawl and since the decay of 19th century industry has left our cities in need of a strong commonsense clean-up. We have found the practical problems being compounded by left-wing councils viewing all industry as pariahs. For example, in Manchester this week, we saw very expensive grassed areas levelled by the ratepayer and central Government with no thought as to how the central deserts could be brought back into productive use. We suggest that flourishing industry is the best guarantee of a good conservation policy.

Conclusion

Government spends taxpayers' money on the environment through nearly all Departments, but principally through MAFF, DoE, Energy and D/Tp. With a little care, we should get considerable credit for the work done. We set out in the

annex some of the ways in which Government supports volunteers in this sector. The ideas you may wish to support - more conservation volunteers and jobs, a British conservation/pollution Fair, 1987 and conservation at Chequers?

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Hartley Booth'.

HARTLEY BOOTH

Annex

Government Help to Voluntary Sector With
Special Reference to Conservation

The Government gave special grants of £1.5 million to conservation groups 1985/6. The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers received £100,000, the Green Alliance £13,000, the RSPB urban schools programme £8,000.

Total given by the Government to the voluntary sector was £222 million, which is a real rise of 56% over the last five years. The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) was founded in 1959, made a charity in 1970 and is the largest United Kingdom body of its kind. It has 389 groups and 190 school members. It produced 1.6 million work days from its 0.25 millions volunteers last year.

The MSC produced 6.25^(million) man and woman work days during the last year with 36,500 participants.

If you add together the community programme, the BTCV work and the Youth Training Schemes, there are 36 schemes on conservation in 1984/5. ?



BIOGRAPHIES

SIR DEREK BARBER

Chairman of the Countryside Commission since 1981. Farm-owner, writer and environmental consultant to Chartered Surveyors. Joint author of "Farming for Profit" (1961); served 30 years in MAFF National Agriculture Advisory Service; Chairman (until 1980) of BBC central agricultural advisory committee; founder member of Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group. 1976-81 Chairman of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

MR WILLIAM WILKINSON

Chairman of Nature Conservancy Council since 1983. Ex-merchant banker; former Director Kleinwort Benson; Ex-Council Member of Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Ex-Council Member and Vice-Chairman of Game Conservancy. Founder, member and former Chairman of Ornithological Society of the Middle East. Member of several County Naturalists' Trusts.

LORD BLAKENHAM

Chairman, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Chairman Pearson PLC; the Financial Times; Madame Tussaud's. Director, Lazard Brothers. Previously with English Electric, Standard Industrial Group, Royal Doulton.

LT COL IAN BRANTON

Director, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers - a major body concerned with organising voluntary work in the wider countryside.



MR TOM BURKE

Director of the Green Alliance since 1982. Currently Chairman of the Planning and Environment Group of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and a member of its Executive Committee, Honorary Press Officer and Policy Adviser to the European Environment Bureau, Member of the Board of Directors of Earth Resources Research, Honorary Visiting Fellow at Manchester Business School. Formerly Vice-Chairman, Executive Director and Local Groups Co-ordinator of Friends of the Earth, member of the Waste Management Advisory Council, member of the Packaging Council, author and/or editor of several books and pamphlets on environmental policy matters. SDP Parliamentary Candidate for Surbiton.

SIR ARTHUR NORMAN

Chairman, UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development, (CEED) since 1984; Chairman, the De La Rue Company, since 1964, Vice-Chairman, Sun-Life Assurance Society, since 1984; President, Confederation of British Industries 1968-76; Ex-Chairman World Wildlife Fund, UK 1977-84, Member of Nature Conservancy Council since 1980, Board Member, International Institute for Environment and Development. CEED grew from the launch of the World Conservation Strategy in 1980. A non-governmental organisation established in 1984, it aims to promote a productive partnership between conservation and development.



PRIME MINISTER'S LUNCH WITH CONSERVATIONISTS: 25 NOVEMBER 1985

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Does Government policy adequately address the key issues in UK environment policy?

- "Green growth". Conservation need not be anti-growth; developments consistent with the sustainable use of the world's resources will be more efficient as well as being environmentally benign or productive. New pollution control technologies offer new markets to be won.

The UK will be represented at Ottawa in 1986 when progress on implementing the "World Conservation Strategy" will be reviewed. Sir Arthur Norman may wish to describe how CEED has promoted the partnership between developer and conservationist in the short and long term.

- Acid Rain. The UK has achieved more than 40% reduction in sulphur emissions since the 1970 peak. We hope to achieve 30% down on 1980 by the late 1990s (24% already). Can we justify expenditure of some £300m to bring that target forward a few years to meet the arbitrary goal set by the 30% Club? Cost effective reductions in SO₂ and NO_x emissions are being achieved: fuel substitution, nuclear power programme, reduction in emissions from motor vehicles (and UK still leads on removal of lead from petrol). In 1985/86 DOE research programme includes £3.4m on research into air pollutants. £10m + per annum is being spent by CEGB and others on control technologies.

- Radioactive discharges and waste disposal. Public confidence is essential to the safe management of the nuclear power programme. Strict controls over discharges and use of the best practicable environmental options (BPEO) for managing radioactive wastes must be believed to work. Emerging conclusions of a study of BPEO, expected



early next year, indicate that an optimum strategy would involve early use of all disposal options (Mr Burke has seen a draft). A positive approach is needed from environmentalists regardless of their views about nuclear power - shutting off options one by one will not eradicate the need to provide for the storage and eventual disposal of radioactive waste. Given an expanding nuclear power programme - environmentally clean in itself - and the other sources of radioactive waste materials, how would the participants plan for the safe management of these wastes?

- HM Pollution Inspectorate. Environmentalists agree with ^{Industry} ~~the CBI~~ in wanting the Industrial Air Pollution Inspectorate, transferred from DOE to HSE in 1974, to be returned to DOE as part of a unified pollution inspectorate. Industry presently has to go to many different bodies for consents. It has not yet been publicly confirmed that the Government is looking into this.

2. Do we have the right powers over land use? Is the conservation/farming/development balance right? How will we plan the use of land coming out of agricultural production? (Sir Derek Barber's suggestion).

- Planning system. Both development and conservation are served by a planning system which plans change efficiently and effectively. The use of land for agriculture is excluded and many buildings and engineering operations on agricultural land are permitted under the GDO. Certain limited and focussed new controls are being considered as a fall-back where voluntary co-operation is inadequate eg for intensive livestock units, or the external appearance of developments in National Parks. But farmers have been generally responsible guardians of the countryside and their co-operation in conservation is essential.

General
Development
Order



- Landscape change. Since 1981 the NCC has been involved with over 1000 management agreements, the keystone in the voluntary approach to countryside management endorsed by the House of Commons Environment Select Committee. New schemes providing incentives for environmentally-conscious farming methods were a great achievement for MAFF in Brussels. A recent MAFF survey showed that many farmers were actively planting trees and hedgerows and creating ponds.

- CAP reforms. The EC Commission's Green Paper on perspectives for the CAP recognises growing concern about the consequences of financial incentives to maximise agricultural output. The UK has taken a lead in Europe on this issue. It may lead to conflicts of interest as land comes out of production - between forestry, commerce, industry, housing, tourism and leisure activities. But it will not happen overnight. What should Government be doing to anticipate?

- Rural economy. The voluntary approach recognises the importance of a thriving farming community to rural life. The Development Commission and COSIRA have helped to bring new life to rural communities through small industry and tourism opportunities. There have been calls for a comprehensive statement of the Government's rural strategy - what should it contain? What opportunities - especially employment opportunities - could be developed further?

3. What are or should be the roles of the voluntary sector, the statutory agencies, the Manpower Services Commission in conservation?

(British Trust for Conservation Volunteers)

- BTCV study. Lt Col Branton has been involved with Dartington Institute in producing a DOE funded study of the scale, type and effectiveness of environmental work by volunteers and MSC projects. He may wish to discuss some of the conclusions, yet to be considered by Ministers.



£1.5m grants were provided in 1985/86 for DOE-related activities. The statutory agencies - NCC and Countryside Commission - will receive £50m in 1986/87, some of course going to the voluntary sector. The Government wishes to encourage this activity - what are the priorities? The MSC supports some environmental work - is there scope for better links with the conservation movement? Where do participants see the major opportunities for job creation in this field?

- Business sponsorship. The Government's 1983 initiative is to be re-launched next year. Sir Arthur Norman has a keen interest. Does sponsorship of volunteer work act as conscience money, detracting from an environmentally-conscious corporate approach? How can it be directed to produce the greatest effect?

4. Key issues in the urban environment? Why so much unused land and derelict buildings? How should that be tackled?

In England 100-150 ha. of urban land is being reclaimed for housing each year, enough for 3-4000 houses that would otherwise need greenfield sites. 5-600~~0~~ ha. per annum are being made available to industry. £82m was spent on derelict land grants this year. But still 44,000 ha. lie unused in public land registers, at least half of which has high or medium potential for development although much of it is in areas where market demand is weak.

Urban Programme; Groundwork on the urban fringe (Sir Derek Barber is Deputy Chairman); National Garden Festivals; city farms; all provide opportunities for involving the MSC in projects providing unemployed youth with work to improve their environment. How far are voluntary groups organised to involve local communities? What scope is there to achieve more than environmental improvement from greening the cities?

CC BF

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD
WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON SW1A 2HH



From the Minister

PERSONAL

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
No 10 Downing Street
Whitehall
London SW1A

21 November 1985

Dear Prime Minister

On return from my visit to China and my subsequent attendance at the meeting of the Council of Ministers in Brussels, I have seen the correspondence which Sir Derek Barber has had with your Office, which was copied to mine, about your 'conservation' lunch on 25 November. (I had not previously heard about this lunch.)

*at own
of PAP.*

The issue to which Derek Barber refers - the probability of land being removed from food production and the question of its alternative use - is an active one. Derek Barber has been giving a lot of thought to it, and although by no means all his suggestions are sensible, some of his points are valid. You may recall that I sent you, under cover of your minute of 30 September, a paper very much addressed to this issue. Because of its political sensitivity, which both you and I recognise and to which Willie Whitelaw referred, I have given that paper no wider circulation, and do not propose to do so until you decide that you wish it to be considered further. Ministers from the Department of the Environment therefore have not seen it. Still less have outsiders - though you will find that the factual forecasts in it are now the subject of general discussion. You may care to refresh your mind on the contents of my paper before your lunch.

You will, I know, appreciate that those invited to your lunch - all articulate, some of them very responsible - will be speaking from one particular perspective. If you wished, I could recommend to you participants in a similar lunch, which could give you another, complementary, perspective. I genuinely believe that these days we can - as a matter of both principle and fact - speak about 'complementary' rather than 'conflicting' interests in most environmental matters.

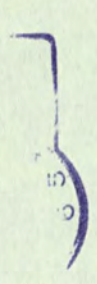
In due course I would be glad to hear - as far as my responsibilities are concerned - how your lunch goes.

*Yours truly
Michael*

MICHAEL JOPLING

Agriculture & Expenditure

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD
POSTAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE



COMMUNICATIONS



TELEGRAMS

Sg 22/11
✓ Sue Woodchild.

PM is content.

MEA 22/11

PRIME MINISTER

THE CONSERVATION LUNCH ON MONDAY

I attach a draft seating plan for the lunch. Points to note are:-

1. The Department of the Environment tell me that Sir Derek Barber, Viscount Blakenham, and Ian Branton are the key outsiders, so I have put them as close to you as possible.

2. Tom Burke has now been adopted as SDP candidate for Surbiton. But William Waldegrave vouches for his value at a lunch like this. I suggest putting him on your side of the table, but at the end.

3. The draft plan suggests that the Secretary of State and William Waldegrave should be reasonably near you, but on the other side of the table. You may, however, prefer that they should go to the ends, allowing the "outsiders" to come nearer the middle. I know William Waldegrave would be happy to move down. But on balance I think it would be better to leave the plan as it is.

Content with the draft plan?

Yes me

MEA

MEA

21 November, 1985.

ENVIRONMENTAL LUNCH: CONSERVATION AND THE FUTURE OF THE CAP

Conservationists fear that a reform of the CAP will have damaging effects on the countryside. It is suggested, for example, that price reductions will lead to a substantial surplus acreage (eg 1 million hectares, or 5% of the total UK agricultural area), as production becomes more concentrated in larger farms, on the better land.

Points to make

1. First, a debating point. Conservationists are trying to have it both ways. They were concerned when the CAP was encouraging farmers to rip out hedges, level land and plough up the pasture, all in order to increase cereal production. Now that there is some prospect that the control of the CAP budget may reverse this process, conservationists are complaining again.
2. We shouldn't exaggerate the rate at which the CAP can be reformed. It needs price reductions of about 4% a year in real terms just to prevent the surpluses from growing. Our partners seem unwilling to envisage the larger price reductions which are needed to reduce the surpluses.
3. If, and when, surpluses are reduced, some land will undoubtedly be taken out of production, but economic forces will limit the extent. High commodity prices have forced up the price of farmland, encouraging intensive

farming operations. Lower agricultural prices will have the reverse effect. Land prices might fall in real terms; farmers will be encouraged to farm it more extensively, using fewer nitrates, and grazing fewer animals per acre.

4. There is no reason for any mass "exodus from the land". Farmers are enterprising businessmen and will adapt to changed circumstances. They are already doing so: farm tourism is the fastest-growing sector in farming.

Landscape conservation: where do we go from here?

The Government has made steady progress in reconciling agriculture and conservation (see Annex A). Can the conservation interests advise us how to respond to CAP reform? Should we:

- Think about alternative uses for agricultural land which are environmentally acceptable, and amend the planning system accordingly? It is absurd, for example, that a golf course has been refused planning permission because of agricultural objections.
- Reward farmers for doing environmentally-desirable things which they might not otherwise do and phase out grants which encourage operations which do nothing for, or even harm, the environment.

ANNEX: OUR RECENT RECORD ON CONSERVATION AND AGRICULTURE

In response to criticism from environmental interests, we have taken some significant steps to restructure agricultural grants in a manner which is sensitive to the environment. We have, for example:

1. Secured an amendment this year in the Community's Agriculture Structures Regulation (Article 19) which allows grants to promote low-intensity farming in Environmentally-Sensitive Areas (ESAs). And whereas Community grants usually encourage (unwanted) production, these grants do not, since they are based, not on the head of the animal population, but on the acreage which is preserved.
2. Substantially pruned the domestic grant scheme which now encourages the provision of hedges, walls and shelter belts; energy conservation; and the replacement of orchards.
3. Accepted the Countryside Commission's own "Broads Grazing Marshes Conservation Scheme", under Section 40, Wildlife and Countryside Act, which provides incentive payments of £50 per acre for farmers who agree to manage the grazing marshes in a traditional way.



cc 17B

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:
Your ref:

20 November 1985

Dear Mark

PRIME MINISTER'S LUNCH WITH CONSERVATIONISTS: 25 NOVEMBER 1985

Thank you for your letter of 28 October asking for briefing on the topics which the Prime Minister's guests have been asked to consider (your letter at A) and the additional point suggested by the Chairman of the Countryside Commission (his letter to you of 4 November at B).

The focus of the lunch is wildlife and countryside conservation and the guest list reflects that, although the topics proposed go somewhat wider. The purpose of the lunch is, of course, to provide the Prime Minister with an opportunity to hear and discuss the professional concerns and hopes of leading figures in the world of conservation; and in turn to express her own awareness of current debate and the importance the Government places on these issues. The attached briefing (C) also suggests areas in which she might press the participants for ideas for the future.

Brief biographies of the guests are at (D). The guest list is at (E).

Yours sincerely

Sue Vandervord

SUE VANDERVORD
Private Secretary

Mark Addison Esq



GUEST LIST

Sir Derek Barber
Chairman
Countryside Commission

Mr William Wilkinson
Chairman
Nature Conservancy Council

Lord Blakenham
Chairman of Council
RSPB

Lt Col Ian Branton
Director and Secretary
British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

Mr Tom Burke
Director
Green Alliance

Sir Arthur Norman
Chairman
Centre for Economic and Environmental Development

The Rt Hon Kenneth Baker

The Hon William Waldegrave (who has retained general responsibility
for conservation)

Mrs Angela Rumbold (who has responsibility for conservation at PUSS
level)

Dr Hartley Booth

Mr Mark Addison



Sue Goodchild

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

14 November 1985

I enclose a copy of a letter, together with enclosures, from Ian Branton, Director of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, who is coming to the lunch on 25 November. His letter notes that he has already copied it to William Solesbury, but I thought it worth forwarding the annual report to you in case you had not already had sight of it.

No doubt you will be covering the forthcoming study "Work and the Environment" in the briefing you are providing for the lunch.

Mark Addison

Miss Sue Vandervord,
Department of the Environment.

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers



36 St. Mary's Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 0EU Wallingford (0491) 39766

Mr Addison to see

Ref: IHB/EC/1196

Lunch on 25 November

Date: 12 November 1985.

Mark Addison, Esq.,
The Private Secretary,
10, Downing Street,
London.

RM

MAS

Dear *Mr Addison,*

Thank you for your letter of 28th October. The BTCV, with the Dartington Institute, is currently engaged on a Study commissioned by the Department of the Environment, entitled 'Work and the Environment'. We are examining the roles of the voluntary sector and MSC concerning environmental projects in both rural and urban areas. The Report will be issued before 25 November and it is possible that the Department of the Environment will wish to brief you on any points of the Report which they think are worth pursuing.

There are no specific points which I wish to raise at the lunch but I am taking the opportunity to send you, with this note, a copy of the BTCV's latest Annual Report, together with a set of Accounts.

This note is copied to William Solesbury at the Department of the Environment for information.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Branton

Ian Branton
(Director)

Encl:

Copies to: W.R. Solesbury, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 November 1985

Thank you for your letter of 4 November. I am sure the Prime Minister would be happy for the discussion at the lunch on 25 November to cover the impact of future changes in the pattern of land use, including the effects of any shift away from agriculture to other uses. But I know the Prime Minister will of course also be keen to ensure the discussion covers a wide range of conservation topics, and the time which can be devoted to each will necessarily be limited.

The Prime Minister looks forward to seeing you at the lunch.

Mark Addison

Sir Derek Barber.

Save : for info.

ls



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 November 1985

Sue: for info

bc: Hartley Booth

As we discussed on the telephone earlier today, I enclose for information a copy of Sir Derek Barber's letter to me, together with a copy of my reply. I should be grateful if you would ensure that the points he raises are covered in the briefing you will be providing, by Wednesday 20 November, for this "conservation" lunch.

I am copying this to Ruth Rawling (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food), and your officials will of course be in touch with hers in drawing up the briefing.

Mark Addison

Miss Sue Vandervord,
Department of the Environment.

Countryside COMMISSION

From the Chairman, Sir Derek Barber
John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 3RA
Telephone/Fonofax: (0242) 521381

Mr Mark Addison
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Our ref.
Your ref.
Ext. no. 210
Date 4 November 1985

Dear Mr Addison. to see

Thank you for your letter of 28 October. I much look forward to attending on 25 November.

You invite suggestions for further specific points to raise. May I offer an addition to your list?

I have no doubt at all that the potential major influence on our landscapes and on the conservation generally of our farmed land lies in the effects of change in the Common Agricultural Policy over the next decade. The probability of land being removed from food production to achieve balance between output and consumption - studies suggest several million acres within 10-20 years - poses the pregnant question of what is to be the alternative use. Moreover there will be earlier influences on the ways in which land is managed consequent upon developing price constraints and pressure on incomes.

May it be too wideranging an issue to introduce at a lunch party discussion?

*Yours sincerely
Derek Barber*

DEREK BARBER
Chairman



Lunch for conservationists
25/11

The Green Alliance

60 CHANDOS PLACE LONDON WC2N 4HG TELEPHONE 01-836 0341

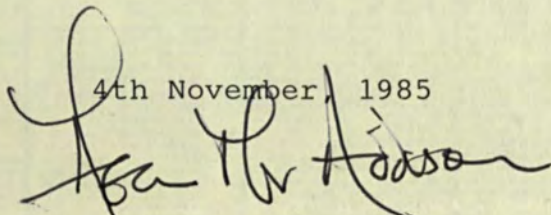
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Go see

Mr. Mark Addison
No.10 Downing Street
London SW1

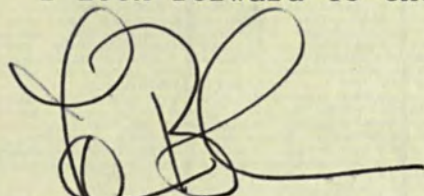
cc HB.

4th November, 1985



Thank you for your letter of October 28th. I have written formally to accept. The likely topics of conversation you mention seem sufficiently wide to cover any of the points which I might raise. I have spoken to Hartley Booth recently and he is aware of the points I wish to contribute.

I look forward to the 25th.

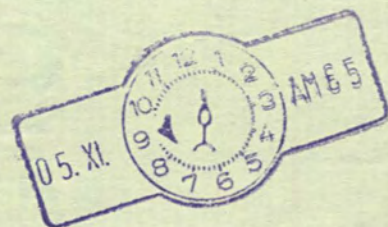


Tom Burke
Director

My copy

President: Maurice Ash
Acting Chairman: Elisabeth Sidney Hon. Treasurer: Richard Holme
Committee: Tim Beaumont, Tom Burke, Robin Grove-White, Nigel Haigh, David Hall,
Roger Harrison, Tony Jones, Jonathan Porritt, Diana Schumacher.
Director: Tom Burke
Secretary: Angela Henderson
Special Projects: Tessa Tennant





LIST OF GUESTS ATTENDING THE LUNCHEON TO BE GIVEN BY
THE PRIME MINISTER ON MONDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 1985 AT 1.00 PM FOR
1.15 PM

The Prime Minister

Sir Derek Barber Chairman, Countryside Commission

Mr. William Wilkinson Chairman, Nature Conservancy Council

The Viscount Blakenham Chairman of Council, RSPB

Mr. Ian Branton Director and Secretary, British
Trust for Conservation Volunteers

Mr. Tom Burke Director, Green Alliance

Sir Arthur Norman Centre for Economic and Environmental
Development

Rt. Hon. Kenneth Baker, MP

The Hon. William Waldegrave, MP

Mrs. Angela Rumbold, MP

Dr. Hartley Booth

Mr. Mark Addison



bc HB.
cc DO EC ^{Wigmore}
^{Reinhold}

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

28 October 1985

CONSERVATION LUNCH: 25 NOVEMBER

I am now able to enclose a formal invitation and admit card for this forthcoming lunch. I also enclose a copy of the letter I have sent those who have been invited to the lunch from outside government, together with a full list of all those coming.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Private Secretaries to other Ministers in your Department who will also be present at the lunch, together with their formal invitation and admit cards.

(Mark Addison)

Robin Young, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

6



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

28 October 1985

The Prime Minister is glad that you will be able to attend the small informal lunch here at No.10 on Monday 25 November, to discuss current conservation issues. I now enclose a formal invitation, a list of those attending, and an admit card which you should bring with you.

The Prime Minister hopes the lunch will provide an informal opportunity to discuss wildlife and countryside conservation. There will be no set agenda, but the Prime Minister envisages that the discussion will cover at least some of the following topics:-

- What are the key issues in UK environment policy? Does Government policy adequately address these main issues e.g. air pollution, radioactive waste disposal?
- Do we have the right powers over land use? Is the conservation/farming/development balance right?
- What is, or should be, the role of the voluntary sector in conservation? Is it likely to change? Are the Government's own agencies organised correctly? What scope is there for greater involvement, for example, by the Manpower Services Commission?
- What are the key issues so far as the urban environment is concerned? Why is there apparently so much unused land and why are there so many derelict buildings in our towns and cities? How can the improvement of the urban environment best be tackled?

If you have in mind any specific points which you would like to raise at the lunch, it would be very helpful if you could let me know of them as soon as possible.

The Prime Minister is looking forward to seeing you on 25 November.

(Mark Addison)



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 November 1985

Thank you for your letter of 4 November. I am sure the Prime Minister would be happy for the discussion at the lunch on 25 November to cover the impact of future changes in the pattern of land use, including the effects of any shift away from agriculture to other uses. But I know the Prime Minister will of course also be keen to ensure the discussion covers a wide range of conservation topics, and the time which can be devoted to each will necessarily be limited.

The Prime Minister looks forward to seeing you at the lunch.

Mark Addison

Sir Derek Barber.

GUEST LIST

Sir Derek Barber
Chairman
Countryside Commission

Mr William Wilkinson
Chairman
Nature Conservancy Council

Lord Blakenham
Chairman of Council
RSPB

Lt Col Ian Branton
Director and Secretary
British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

Mr Tom Burke
Director
Green Alliance

Sir Arthur Norman
Chairman
Centre for Economic and Environmental Development

The Rt Hon Kenneth Baker

The Hon William Waldegrave (who has retained general
responsibility for conservation)

Mrs Angela Rumbold (who has responsibility for
conservation at PUSS level)

Dr Hartley Booth

Mr Mark Addison

MJ2BHH



10 DOWNING STREET

Sent to : Barber
Wilkinson
Blakenham
Branton
Burke
Norman

From the Private Secretary

28 October 1985

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If you have in mind any specific points which you would like to raise at the lunch, it would be very helpful if you could let me know of them as soon as possible.

The Prime Minister is looking forward to seeing you on 25 November.

(Mark Addison)

A

Mr. Hartley Booth

Mrs. Angela Rumbold

Mr. William Wilkinson
Chairman,
Nature Conservancy Council.

Mr. Ian Branton
Director and Secretary,
British Trust for
Conservation Volunteers

The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Baker

PRIME MINISTER

Sir Derek Barber
Chairman,
Countryside Commission

Viscount Blakenham
Chairman of Council,
RSPB

The Hon. William Waldegrave

Mr. Tom Burke
Director,
Green Alliance

Sir Arthur Norman
Chairman,
Centre for Economic and
Environmental Development

Mr. Mark Addison

CF 162
Papers pleasePRIME MINISTERCONSERVATION LUNCH ON 25 NOVEMBER

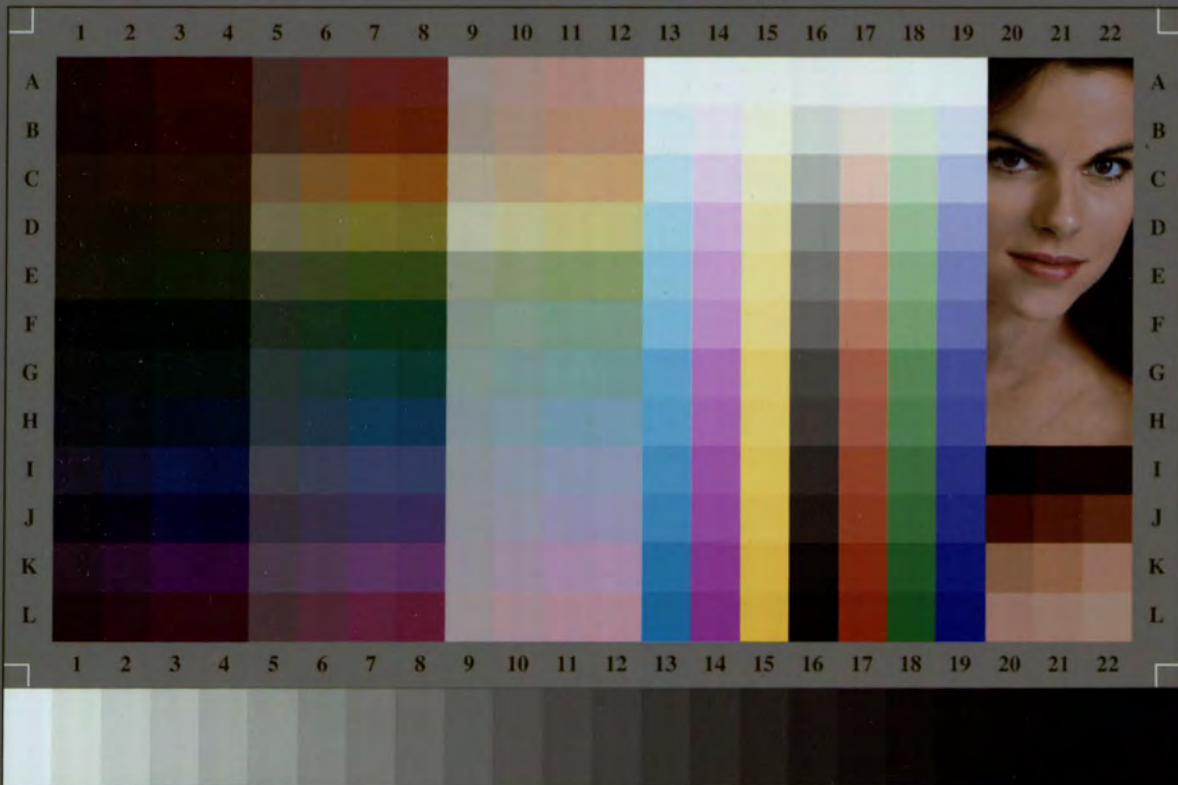
You asked that the draft letter to those coming to this lunch should be looked at again to ensure that urban environmental issues would be covered in the discussion. You were also concerned that 13 was too large a group to get round the table in the small dining room.

A revised draft letter, for my signature, is attached. It flags up specifically the urban environmental point, and mentions in particular the question of derelict and unused land and buildings. The whole question of the urban environment has of course been raised to a much higher profile following the Handsworth, Brixton and Tottenham riots and you are hoping to discuss inner cities with colleagues at a working breakfast before too long. So you will not I think wish to dwell too much on urban matters at this conservation lunch where the discussion would naturally focus rather on wildlife and countryside conservation.

I had a word both with Michael Alison and Hartley Booth, and Michael has kindly agreed to step down. A revised list of those coming to lunch is attached. The total number will now come to 12.

Mark Addison

Mark Addison21 October 1985



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