PREM 19/2965

MT.

PART 3

CONFIDENTIAL FILING

Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution
Effects of Acid Rain
Ozone Layer Conference
Agriculture and Conservation
Climatic Change
Environmental Protection Bill.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

PT1: September 1979
PT13: December 1989

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
~~11.12.89~~							
~~14.12.89~~							
~~19.12.89~~							
~~9.1.90~~							
~~11.1.90~~							
~~15.1.90~~							
~~22.1.90.~~							
31.1.90							
PART CLOSED							

PREM 19/2965

PART ~~14~~ 13 ends:-

CAS to PM - 31.1.90

PART 14. begins:-

Norwegian Amb. to CSP.

1.2.90

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

MISC 141

I attach papers as follows:

BRIEFS

Handling brief from Richard Wilson (you have not seen this before). Numerous decisions will need to be taken at this meeting; but a central question will be whether to work on the assumption that CO2 emissions should be stabilised by 2000 or 2020. DOE stress that levels must be stabilised. DEn and DTp work suggests that only the latter target is achievable without radical and damaging changes to existing policies. A judgement has to be made about what targets can be negotiated internationally - developing countries may be pushing us to reduce our levels. The timing of the electricity privatisation makes negotiations difficult. Although further work on the implications of this may be necessary, you will also want to reflect on the implications of policy options for privatisation.

Notes by Carolyn Sinclair (you have seen these before). She stresses the importance of energy efficiency measures in both the energy and transport sectors; and suggests officials should draw up a list of options, leaving the most difficult - especially those involving prices - to the end. She suggests Mr Wakeham underrates the extent to which potential investors in the electricity industry will realise already that international pressures will lead to a move away from fossil fuels. She thinks privatised companies must be given a commercial interest in promoting energy saving measures. On car ownership, she says there is no question of removing the right to own cars. But public opinion might be educated to accept pricing to discourage use - in an analagous way to taxation of drink and tobacco. She also wonders whether the assumption that the road building programme should not be curtailed should be questioned.

MEMORANDUM

(You have seen these before)

Flag A — Minute from the Secretary of State for the Environment which argues that Misc 141 will need to decide - on all the evidence - that the global target must be stabilisation of CO2 at present levels. There may well be international pressure to do more. He suggests that Misc 141 needs to assure itself that this can be achieved, but need not spell out how in any detail in the White Paper;

Flag B — A memorandum from the Secretary of State for Energy. He underlines the major difficulties of timing between international action and privatisation of the electricity industry. He also points out just how greatly changes from coal to gas could affect the coal industry. Reading his paper makes one wonder whether the timetable for the electricity privatisation can be sustained;

Flag C — A memorandum from the Secretary of State for Transport. This suggests the Government should not restrict people's right to own cars (although it implies such action may be necessary to meet targets); and that fuel price increases and regulation will be necessary. It rules out reducing the road building programme; and floats the interesting idea that land use planning decisions are important in traffic use;

Flag D — Further correspondence on the proposal by Mr Patten that the UK should take the lead in setting up and running a new sub-group of the IPCC which will look at this problem. Carolyn's note (which you have already seen) is also attached. These papers give considerable support for the UK taking the lead. The main objection comes from Mr Wakeham who is wary of taking such a leading part when the options for action are so unclear. He agrees a sub-group should be established. But he thinks that a smaller OECD country should take the lead.

MISC 141 PAPERS

Folder 1	Cabinet summary paper;
Folder 2	FCO paper, with international timetable flagged up;
Folder 3	DOE paper;
Folder 4	Energy Paper on Greenhouse Emissions in the energy sector;
Folder 5	Energy paper on options for Energy Efficiency;
Folder 6	DTP paper on limiting emissions in the transport sector;
Folder 7	DOE paper on methane.

CAS

Caroline Slocock
31 January 1990

PRIME MINISTER P 03622

CONTROL OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS
MISC 141(90)2

The Cabinet Office Note brings out the main questions arising from the papers attached to it, by the Foreign Office and the Departments of the Environment, Energy and Transport.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

2. You may wish to begin by discussing the dilemma outlined in paragraph 2 of the Note. International discussions on climate change are reported to be heading towards a consensus that the developed countries should at least stabilise their emissions of carbon dioxide at present levels by 2000. The developing countries are likely to press hard for a reduction in emissions by the developed countries so that they can increase their own emissions. But we would be unlikely to meet even the target of stabilisation without radical early action which would impose heavy economic costs and affect electricity privatisation and transport policy.

3. Departments fear that if we depart from the international consensus we will risk losing the leading position which we have taken so far. But the papers suggest that we might be able to stabilise UK emissions at present levels by 2020, with higher emissions in the meantime. A crucial judgement is whether this is likely to be negotiable internationally. You will want to ask the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for the Environment for their views.

THE INTERNATIONAL TIMETABLE

4. Immediate areas where decisions are needed are:

i. our approach to EC work on economic instruments, including tax (paragraph 3 (iv)). The Treasury will be

bringing forward a paper for MISC 141 on 22 February. But the Commission are already collecting experts' views, and there is a case for trying to influence their thinking at this formative stage. The Commission seem to be talking of studies and guidelines. We will need to steer them away from any idea of harmonisation while avoiding action by individual member states which would undermine the single market. You will wish to decide whether you want officials to enter into preliminary discussions now or to wait until after the next meeting MISC 141 on 22 February.

ii. the timetable for electricity privatisation (paragraph 3(v). The need for the Government to state a clear position in the electricity prospectus and then stick to it may make our negotiating position in the Second World Climate Conference on 27 October - 7 November difficult. You will want to ask the Secretary of State for Energy for his views and perhaps commission further work by the DEn, DOE and FCO to see if the difficulty can be overcome.

iii. Our role in international work on emission targets (paragraph 4(i)). Mr Patten's letter of 23 January to Mr Hurd proposes that the UK should offer to act as a "topic coordinator" for the development of targets so that we would be in a strong position to influence the outcome. But it might also put us under pressure to accept the emerging international consensus and the resulting targets. The Secretary of State for Energy may have reservations. Ministers will want to decide whether we should offer to lead this work.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: GLOBAL POSITION

5. The scientific assessment of climate change appears to have developed since you considered these matters last year. The emerging consensus is reported to be that:

i. An increase of 0.1°C per decade in average global temperatures is the maximum which can be tolerated without significant environmental damage.

ii. If no action is taken to control emissions, the increase in temperatures is likely to be at least twice this level, so that cuts in projected emissions will be needed.

iii. The paper sets out the most which can be expected from vigorous action on CFCs and methane. The scientific analysis is that even on the most optimistic assumptions, global carbon dioxide levels will need to be stabilised at about current levels to meet the temperature criterion.

6. We are advised that no scientist of stature in the field is likely to challenge the IPCC Report; and that the analysis is based on the most optimistic assumptions. On the other hand uncertainties do remain, and bringing about the degree of change which the analysis implies would be a painful process which could not be achieved overnight. There may be an argument for beginning to move part of the way towards stabilisation of emissions, concentrating in particular on what can be done with existing technology and at an acceptable cost, while keeping the scientific evidence and the need for further action under close review. You will wish to decide what basic approach the Government should adopt and what further studies should be carried out to help define it.

7. The paper also raises questions about our negotiating position internationally, in particular:

i. whether we should favour an overall limit on all the greenhouse gases (measured in some common currency) or separate limits on each gas;

ii. what our stand should be in relation to other

countries, particularly the developing countries who are likely to press us to make a disproportionate contribution to the control of emissions;

You may want to commission further work from Mr Patten towards a negotiating remit.

8. The remaining sections of the paper consider what would be involved in constraining emissions of greenhouse gases in the UK.

EMISSIONS IN THE UK ENERGY SECTOR

9. The Department of Energy paper looks at the main technological options for reducing UK carbon dioxide emissions from the non-transport energy sector. You may want to concentrate on Table 3 from the paper, reproduced in the Cabinet Office Note, which shows the scope for savings, and gives an indication of resource costs.

10. The paper considers the implications of stabilising emissions at 1990 levels on two timescales:

i. by 2000. The paper concludes that this might be possible technologically. But it would involve early retirement of coal-fired power stations, heavy economic costs and higher prices. Mr Wakeham is likely to argue that it would jeopardise the future of the coal industry, policy on electricity prices and the privatisation of the electricity industry, and should be ruled out.

ii. by 2020. The paper concludes that strenuous efforts could achieve this target, at an overall cost to the economy of up to £4 billion per year. Mr Wakeham is likely to say that this is the only realistic option, on the assumption that we have to contain emissions at the 1990 level.

You will want to consider whether a target of stabilisation by 2020 would be negotiable internationally.

11. More generally, you will wish to give officials guidance on the options which should be pursued, and commission new work to identify a realistic policy package for achieving reductions.

EMISSIONS IN THE UK TRANSPORT SECTOR

12. The Department of Transport paper looks at some of the main options for reducing carbon dioxide emissions from motor vehicles, excluding radical options which would constrain people's freedom to own and use cars. You may wish to concentrate on the table from paragraph 38 of the paper, which is reproduced in the Cabinet Office Note.

13. The paper concludes that there is a realistic prospect of stabilising UK emissions at the 1990 level by 2020, at least on low traffic growth forecasts, using options considered in the paper. But to do so by 2000, or by 2020 on high growth forecasts, would be very difficult.

14. Mr Parkinson has minuted you with his personal analysis. He argues that radical measures which would limit car ownership and use would not be acceptable. He therefore argues that stabilisation by 2020 is the most stringent objective we could aim to meet, and that even that may not be possible if high growth forecasts are borne out. You will want to consider whether our position in international negotiations should be based on this approach.

15. Here again, you will want to give officials guidance on the options to be pursued, and commission further work on a realistic policy package.

CONTROL OF METHANE EMISSIONS

16. The DOE paper looks at the options for reducing UK emissions

of methane. It concludes that they could be reduced to 20% below current levels by 2020, principally due to natural reductions in agriculture and energy recovery from landfill waste sites. But there could also be scope for further reductions, eg in emissions from the gas and coal industries.

17. You will want to ask Departments to pursue reductions in methane emissions, with a view to identifying policy options for inclusion in the White Paper.

NEXT STEPS

18. At your next meeting on Thursday 22 February you will want to consider two papers:

i. the Treasury paper on the relative merits of different economic instruments (including tax) for securing reductions in greenhouse gas emissions;

ii. the ODA paper on environmental aid for developing countries and technology transfer, on which decisions are needed in connection with international work on the Montreal Protocol.

We will put proposals to you for an agenda including these papers and some of the others which you have commissioned.

20. At a subsequent meeting (perhaps 1 or 6 March) you will wish to consider a progress report on the further work on greenhouse gases commissioned at the present meeting at the present meeting.

BJ.

R T J WILSON
31 January 1990

MISS SLOCOCK 31 January 1990

MISC 141: CONTROL OF GREENHOUSE GASES

Chris Patten, John Wakeham and Cecil Parkinson have written underlining their views in advance of tomorrow's MISC 141 meeting.

Chris Patten argues forcibly that if we are to sustain the international lead we have taken in this area, we must be ready to accept the goal of stabilisation of carbon dioxide emissions at current levels early in the next century.

The MISC 141 papers from Energy and Transport make it clear how difficult this would be. John Wakeham and Cecil Parkinson emphasize the difficulties. These are real, but on two issues are over-stated.

John Wakeham argues that additional emphasis on energy efficiency will reduce investors' expectations of growth in the electricity market and thus add to the difficulties in floating electricity successfully.

This underrates the extent to which investors - especially the more sophisticated - will be aware of the international pressures to reduce the use of fossil fuels, and will be assessing the future demand for electricity against the background of growing "green" awareness in the industrialised countries. It is quite likely that many investors will assume it is only a matter of time before carbon taxes and regulations to enforce higher standards of energy efficiency are with us, whatever the Government says now.

It therefore makes sense to ensure that electricity privatisation

is not seen as the enemy of energy efficiency (and vice versa). This might require some changes - eg to the present pricing formula - to give the privatised companies a commercial interest in promoting energy saving measures.

Cecil Parkinson introduces an unhelpfully emotive concept by talking of people's "right to own cars".

No-one has challenged this. There is not even discussion in the MISC 141 paper of limiting people's right to use cars eg by limiting the numbers entering urban areas.

What we are considering here are pricing mechanisms which reflect the cost to the whole of society of the exercise of a given right. This is not uncommon in other areas. For example, people have the right to drink alcohol and to smoke cigarettes, although both are bad for health if taken in excess, add to the costs of the NHS and thus to the burden on all taxpayers. No-one thinks it odd that both are very heavily taxed indeed, reflecting the general view (in a democratic country) that it is sensible to discourage their use.

The options for limiting emissions of CO_2 from road transport are analogous to excise duties on tobacco and alcohol.

Conclusions

- Press John Wakeham to look for ways of making successful privatisation of the electricity industry compatible with greater encouragement of energy efficiency.

- Avoid emotive phrases like the "right to own cars" and accept that the debate must look coolly at the cost to society of individual car ownership. Public opinion may well shift significantly on this as it has on smoking and drinking to excess.

CAROLYN SINCLAIR

ENV AFFAIRS: Acid Rain Pt 13

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

MISC 141

Richard Wilson's handling brief is not yet available, but will be in tonight's box. Since last night, the following papers have arrived:

- Minute from the Secretary of State for the Environment which argues that Misc 141 will need to decide - on all the evidence - that the global target must be stabilisation of CO2 at present levels. There may well be international pressure to do more. He suggests that Misc 141 needs to assure itself that this can be achieved, but need not spell out how in any detail in the White Paper;

- A note from Carolyn Sinclair about the memorandum submitted by Mr Patten, Mr Wakeham and Mr Parkinson. She suggests Mr Wakeham underrates the extent to which potential investors in the electricity industry will realise already that international pressures will lead to a move away from fossil fuels. She thinks privatised companies must be given a commercial interest in promoting energy saving measures. On car ownership, she says there is no question of removing the right to own cars. But public opinion might be educated to accept pricing to discourage use - in an analagous way to taxation of drink and tobacco.

CS

Caroline Slocock
31 January 1990

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

MISC 141: GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Since your speech to the Royal Society, the UK has been assigned a leading role in the international debate on man made climate change. We have strongly supported the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and persuaded most of the international community to do so too. With the help of our allies - the USA, Japan and the USSR - we have forestalled calls for premature action even though many of our Community partners have been prepared to make arbitrary commitments. We have insisted on the need for international action based on sound science. The IPCC report is assembling the scientific consensus and will soon be available. At the next meeting of MISC 141 we must start to consider the position we should take in the light of the IPCC's likely scientific advice.

The Cabinet office paper draws attention to the information that is currently available, including that presented to earlier scientific conferences and to last autumn's CHOGM. Even on the most optimistic assumptions, it is clear that firm action on a global scale for all major greenhouse gases is necessary if we are to avoid future environmental damage. Even if the international community can limit CFC and methane emissions so as to bring their concentrations back to present levels, stabilisation of carbon dioxide at around current levels will still be required. That conclusion, drawn from the scientific evidence, reflects our own best estimate and is in line with the international consensus revealed by the Noordwijk declaration: it is certain to be very close to the consensus we will face at the Second World Climate Conference in October.

Not least because of the scientific evidence, I think the central message for MISC 141 is that the UK has little choice but to accept that the global target must be stabilisation of carbon dioxide emissions at current levels. That will be very challenging for the UK. The papers from the Department of Energy and the Department of Transport contain many good suggestions which could contribute to stabilisation: many make economic sense anyway. I think we must consider carefully whether, or to what extent, use of the instruments they offer could achieve the objective of stabilising at 1990 levels by 2000. To the extent that they seem likely to fall short, I think we must assess what more we could do and at what cost. At some point we may have to balance what is needed against what seems possible. But the political consequences of failing to accept the targets suggested by the best scientific evidence available could be very serious: our international standing in this area would be seriously weakened and the overall success of our White Paper jeopardised.

Although we will need to assure ourselves that whatever we intend to do in aggregate can be delivered, I see no reason why the White Paper needs to spell out all the details of the particular policy instruments we would use, or the extent to which we propose to use each one. We should retain as much flexibility on those as we can.

There is no disguising the possibility that the UK may be pressed later to do more than just stabilise its emissions at 1990 levels. Much depends on the consensus view on how any global target should be shared out amongst nations. As you know, I believe that we must take an active part in steering that debate within the IPCC to ensure that the ultimate distribution is as equitable as we can make it. However successful our negotiators on that point it is hard to envisage an outcome which would require less of us than stabilisation.

CONFIDENTIAL

I am copying this to the other members of MISC 141 and to Sir Robin Butler.

pp CP

31 January 1990

(approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence).

CONFIDENTIAL

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PRIME MINISTER

MISC 141

A slot has become free tomorrow which you may like to use as an opportunity to study further the bulky Misc 141 papers. I do not yet have Richard Wilson's handling brief but it may be available by tomorrow afternoon.

Since you last saw these papers, we have received:

Flag A A memorandum from the Secretary of State for Energy. He underlines the major difficulties of timing between international action and privatisation of the electricity industry. He also points out just how greatly changes from coal to gas could affect the coal industry. Reading his paper makes one wonder whether the timetable for the electricity privatisation can be sustained;

Flag B A memorandum from the Secretary of State for Transport. This suggests the Government should not restrict people's right to own cars (although it implies such action may be necessary to meet targets); and that fuel price increases and regulation will be necessary. It rules out reducing the road building programme; and floats the interesting idea that land use planning decisions are important in traffic use;

Flag C Further correspondence on the proposal by Mr Patten that the UK should take the lead in setting up and running a new sub-group of the IPCC which will look at this problem. Carolyn's note (which you have already seen) is also attached. These papers give considerable support for the UK taking the lead. The main objection comes from Mr Wakeham who is wary of taking such a leading part when the options for action are so unclear. He agrees a sub-group should be established. But he thinks that a smaller OECD country should take the lead.

A read of the Departmental papers shows just how good a summary Richard Wilson's covering paper is. But you may want to take a brief look at them, especially the FCO one. I have flagged up a table setting out the timetable of all relevant meetings. Reading the papers underlines just how optimistic the underlying assumptions are on which the very gloomy conclusions of these papers are based.

Carolyn Sinclair - in her note on these papers at Flag D - emphasises the importance of fuel prices and energy efficiency measures. She sees scope for using taxation selectively - eg to discourage the use of "gas-guzzling cars." These could be made RPI neutral, she points out. On electricity privatisation, she mentions the idea of a sort of "green dowry" along the lines of the water privatisation - and this may be worth pursuing. She thinks Mr Wakeham is less convinced than his officials about the threat to the viability of the privatisation if changes in existing policies are made. She also questions the assumption in the Transport paper that changes to the road-building programme should not be contemplated. Transport say it is economic growth which leads to increased use of cars - not road building. Indeed the latter may reduce fuel consumption by helping traffic flow and can help the environment (eg by bye-passing historic towns).

CAS

Caroline Slocock
30 January 1990

B 4/5

Prime Minister

MISC 141: 1 FEBRUARY 1990

You will have seen the papers prepared by my officials for our MISC 141 meeting on 1 February which discuss the options for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases (mainly Carbon Dioxide - CO_2) from the non-transport energy sector.

There are three points to which I would like particularly to draw your and colleagues' attention, two related to the implications of action on CO_2 for electricity privatisation and the third the effect on the Coal Industry. First, the timing of the Second World ClimateConference (due to end on 7 November) makes for difficulty in relation to the issue of prospectuses for the flotation of the electricity distribution companies due at the end of November. My officials are looking into the problem in more detail but as I explained in my minute of 8 January the requirements for prospectus disclosure and for a stable situation in the immediate run-up to the sale mean that we will need to have set out in advance of the Conference our bottom line for commitments which could impact on CO_2 emissions from the electricity sector, and ensure we do not get pushed beyond them. I hope we can discuss this at the meeting when we consider how we should act in preparing for the conference and in particular the proposal Chris Patten has made that we should seek to become a topic "co-ordinator" for Carbon Dioxide emissions on which I have written separately to Chris.

Secondly, a commitment by the UK to freeze CO_2 emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000 would be disastrous for the coal industry. The displacement of coal in electricity generation that would be necessary would reduce demand for coal by National Power and PowerGen combined to some 30mt compared with 75mt now. This would imply the reduction of British Coal's deep mine capacity to about one quarter of its present size.

Third, such a commitment could well cast doubt on the feasibility of electricity privatisation as well. It would sharply reduce the value of existing electricity generation assets, introducing a double discount because the market would see that the companies being sold would need to transform themselves radically to compete in the new world. Substantial additional emphasis on energy efficiency would reduce or eliminate investors' expectations of growth in the electricity market, hitting the prospects for the sale of the distribution companies as well. I cannot be sure at this stage whether flotation of the ESI would still be possible against this background, but it would clearly be considerably more difficult than is now expected. My Department will be doing further work on this in consultation with our financial advisers.

I am copying this to the other members of MISC 141 and to Sir Robin Butler.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY

30 January 1990

CLPU

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB
TELEPHONE 01-276 3000

The Rt Hon Chris Patten MP
Secretary of State for the Environment
Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 3EB

My Ref: C/PSO/1135/90

Your Ref:

30 JAN 1990

Dear Chris,

INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON GREENHOUSE GASES

In your letter of 23 January to Douglas Hurd you proposed that the UK should seek to become a topic co-ordinator for work which the IPCC will need to do on the analysis of the options for international emissions targets.

I recognise the danger that the task of co-ordination could force us to identify ourselves with whatever consensus emerges. But there must be a greater danger that, by standing aloof, the IPCC will come up with policy options we find unpalatable. The work which officials have done for the next MISC 141 meeting shows how difficult it may be to stabilise emissions, underlining the need to ensure that the IPCC comes up with options which are realistic.

I therefore agree that the UK should promote the formation of a new topic co-ordination group and that we should put ourselves forward as a co-ordinator.

I am sending copies of this letter to other members of MISC 141 and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever,

CECIL PARKINSON

PRIME MINISTER

MISC 141 : CONTROL OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

We shall be discussing on Thursday the options for stabilising emissions of greenhouse gases and the position we might adopt in international negotiations.

Road transport is a significant source of greenhouse gases. We have already taken steps to civilise the motor car and to mitigate its environmental impact. We have built large numbers of bypasses to get traffic out of our towns. New emission standards for cars from 1993 will reduce very substantially the emission of gases other than CO_2. We will be taking further measures to minimise the impact of road transport on the environment.

CO_2 emissions remain the major problem area and will be a difficult one to tackle. Forecast growth in future levels of traffic imply substantial increases in the level of CO_2 emissions from road transport unless we take countervailing action. Improved fuel efficiency, and the other options discussed in my officials' paper for the MISC 141 meeting, will restrain the growth of emissions to an extent but there is a central political issue to be addressed here. Are we prepared to refuse people the fruits of prosperity and deny their aspirations to own cars and to use them, particularly in view of the relatively lowly position the UK has in the European car ownership league? The options in my officials' paper may be sufficient, on low traffic growth forecasts, to stabilise CO_2 emissions. But they will not be enough to deal with high traffic growth. If more radical measures are needed, we shall have to face up to the central dilemma: are we prepared to restrict peoples' right to own cars?

Whatever action we decide upon, it is likely that both regulatory and pricing mechanisms will be required to cut emissions. Pricing may seem the more attractive option - except to the general public - but the

evidence suggests that unless we are prepared to make unprecedented increases in taxation the impact may be nothing like enough to choke off the demand for travel. Nevertheless a fuel price signal would encourage manufacturers to develop more fuel efficient engines in the longer term. The regulatory approach to enhancing fuel efficiency and reducing the size of engines has worked effectively in the United States, but there is much less scope for this in Europe.

Public transport has a role to play particularly in already congested city centres but it is not a panacea for solving the CO_2 problem. Moreover, many of our present public transport systems are already overloaded and new rail lines themselves have environmental impacts, as recent experience in Kent has shown. Increased investment in public transport should nevertheless lead to some transfer from cars to public transport which could be further enhanced by measures to restrain car use.

I am sure that the thinking which led to the 'Roads for Prosperity' White Paper was soundly based. Demand for road transport is very largely a function of economic growth and is not caused by road building. If present traffic forecasts are right, there will continue to be congestion on many roads even with the expanded programme. If the programme were to be cut back without other measures to reduce traffic growth, the result would be intolerable levels of congestion, with higher CO_2 emissions as well as major economic disbenefits. Land use planning decisions are more likely to affect traffic growth. The problem goes much wider than developments such as out of town shopping centres and amusement parks, because changes in land use generally have reflected peoples' desire for lifestyles which depend on dispersed activities and the transport requirements associated with them.

The need for international cooperation is essential. Efforts taken in Britain alone will have little impact in comparison with the potential increase in car usage in places like eastern Europe and in less developed countries. On the other hand, technology transfer to the less

developed countries might be relatively rapid, given the multi-national nature of the motor industry. Any regulatory options involving vehicle construction will of course have to be pursued within the EC.

If we are to stabilise CO_2 emissions from road transport, the main emphasis must be on increased fuel efficiency but we may have to take action across a broad front. Further work will be needed to decide the right balance between regulatory and market based approaches. But on high traffic growth forecasts, the options we have identified will not be enough to secure stabilisation. I realise that this may present problems. But my view is that we should make our plans on the assumption that people have a right to own motor cars and, with rising prosperity, they will increasingly exercise that right.

I am copying this to other members of MISC 141 and to Sir Robin Butler.

C P

30 JAN 1990

RESTRICTED

THE RT HON JOHN WAKEHAM MP

Department of Energy
1 Palace Street
London SW1E 5HE
01 238 3290

The Rt Hon Chris Patten MP
Secretary of State
for the Environment
Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 3EB

29 January 1990

Dear Chris,

INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 23 January to Douglas Hurd.

I agree entirely that the very difficult and challenging task of following up the Noordwijk remit of analysing options for international emission targets in the IPCC is best undertaken by a new informal group of key players. As you imply, under present IPCC arrangements, the only existing sub-group with the expertise to undertake this task is the Energy and Industry (EIS) Sub-Group. My Department has made a major contribution to that Group's work and will continue to do so, but it is not well organised by Japan and China (the co-chairmen) and I agree that, on past performance it could not be relied on to take the Noordwijk remit forward expeditiously.

Nonetheless, we cannot brush aside the EIS Group. It remains the focal point within the IPCC of essential expertise on the technical and economic implications of options for limiting energy related greenhouse gas emissions. It is also an important focus of Japanese and Chinese involvement in the IPCC. The US, too, attaches importance to its role. For all these reasons, therefore, it will be essential for it (and, of course, other relevant sub-groups) to make a direct contribution to the proposed Noordwijk Group's activities. That may involve re-casting the EIS Sub-Group's responsibilities.

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I also share your view that there are advantages to the UK in seeking the role of lead co-ordinator in the new Group. But there are significant risks attached to that role.

First we must have a clear view of the direction in which we wish to go on emission targets, bearing in mind our other important policy priorities. Without that, we could have difficulty in steering a middle way between those eager for early agreement on arbitrary reduction targets and others, particularly the US, USSR and Japan, who have hung back from the Noordwijk aim of CO_2 stabilisation by 2000.

Second, there is the possibility that the new Group will be unsuccessful in bridging the gap between the various camps and failing, therefore, to fulfil the Noordwijk remit. Such a failure might, unfortunately, be blamed on the lead co-ordinator.

Third, our respective Departments have already committed very considerable resources to existing IPCC activities. Both will have an important contribution to make to the new Group. The resource commitment on the lead co-ordinator in providing adequate scretariat, technical and other support facilities (who absence has so hampered the effectiveness of the EIS sub-group) could prove both high and open-ended.

In these circumstances, having established the UK as a key member of the new Group, I believe it would be much better to manoeuvre a smaller OECD country with a good organisational track record, and an outlook in sympathy with ours into the role of lead co-ordinator. Canada and the Netherlands are obvious candidates.

As you say, there are major implications in taking a forward position. It would be useful to consider these at the forthcoming meeting of MISC 141,

I am copying this letter to other members of MISC 141 and to Sir Robin Butler.

JOHN WAKEHAM

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C:\home\
MISC 141

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

bc: AP

RICHARD WILSON
CABINET OFFICE

MISC 141

The Prime Minister saw over the weekend the papers which will be taken on Thursday and has commented that Ministers will need a lot of time for this meeting in view of the volume of papers and the difficult issues which have to be discussed. Would it be possible to bring Cabinet forward to 0930 and start MISC 141 earlier? This would give an extra half hour.

I am copying this minute to Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

CDS

CAROLINE SLOCOCK
29 January 1990

DAS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PM

RLB

a/home/Bright

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

29 January 1990

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

Thank you for your letter of 19 January in which you enclose a draft minute which your Secretary of State would like to send to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has seen these papers and commented that she has considerable doubts about the specific approach which is suggested. She is concerned by the danger that such a review could become a bureaucratic trawl without coming forward with a sufficient number of new and concrete policy proposals to justify the resources used. MISC 141 is of course already taking a far-reaching look at environmental policies and she is not sure that this review would add much to that work. However, she does agree about the importance of departments making sure that policies take into account environmental objectives; and she suggests that an instruction should be given that environmental matters be taken into account when proposing new policies.

She also commented that Mr.Parkinson, when Energy Secretary, had said that he intended to appoint an adviser on energy efficiency to look into performance of Government departments. This might be a mechanism for ensuring that departments take a searching review of their policies and practices in the energy field.

I am copying this letter to Sonia Phippard in Sir Robin Butler's Office.

CAROLINE SLOCOCK

Roger Bright, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

CONFIDENTIAL

CCPS

D

FCS/90/022

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

International Negotiations on Greenhouse Gas Emissions

1. Thank you for your letter of 23 January attached about follow-up to Noordwijk in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

2. Our officials have been in close contact on these issues, and I agree with the approach you propose, namely to have the work done in a new sub-group. This would offer us the prospect of playing an influential role in co-ordinating the work.

3. I agree with you that our experience of acting as topic co-ordinator in the IPCC on work on the proposed framework Convention on Climate Change suggests that the advantages of playing such a role exceed the disadvantages. I think the active part we played in influencing the outcome of the Noordwijk Conference reinforces that experience. The work we shall be doing in MISC 141 will mean that we have developed our domestic position more than many other countries: this should enable us to play an influential role.

/4.

4. Colleagues may wish to discuss this at the MISC 141 meeting on 1 February, but we shall need to reach a decision then, because our delegation to the IPCC will need to move quickly to square the US chair of the Response Strategies Working Group which is meeting on 2 February, and which is likely to take decisions on how to move the work forward.

5. I am copying this minute to all members of MISC 141 and to Sir Robin Butler.

DH.

(DOUGLAS HURD)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

28 January 1990

PRIME MINISTER 26 January 1990

INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Chris Patten argues that the UK should play a leading role in

- defining targets for global emissions of carbon dioxide;
- examining how these can be measured and enforced;
- allocating the contribution to be made by each participating country.

He proposes that we should promote the idea of a topic co-ordination group in which a small number of countries would co-ordinate the views of all participants in the Second World Climate Conference next October/November. He also suggests that the UK should be one of the co-ordinators. We might find ourselves in company with Canada and the Netherlands.

The pros and cons of taking a high profile in international negotiations are familiar. In this case the pros do seem to have it. We are playing a leading role in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Our scientific work in this field is well respected, and gives us a good basis from which to argue practicalities.

Douglas Hurd and John Major are likely to agree. But there is one proviso, and it is important. Our "co-ordinator" will need to have a brief with a clear bottom line. My separate note on the MISC 141 paper shows how important this will be - we are not likely to have much room for maneovre. The brief should be agreed through the MISC 141 machinery.

Conclusion and recommendation

- Agree with Chris Patten that the UK should press for the creation of a topic co-ordination group, and that the UK should propose itself as one of the co-ordinators.

- But stress the need for our "co-ordinator" to have a clearly defined brief spelling out our bottom line. This should be agreed through the MISC 141 machinery.

CAROLYN SINCLAIR

cc PM

CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister?

CAS 26/1

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

26 January 1990

Dear Roger.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

file into CAS

My Minister has been following with interest the correspondence stimulated by your letter of 21 December to Paul Gray.

The foreign policy implications of Mr Patten's proposals are not great. But there is considerable interest overseas in our environmental policies. They are closely watched. Mr Waldegrave has commented that it would be embarrassing, to say the least, if we appeared to lag behind in offering access to unprocessed environmental data, free access to which was one of the basic demands of those who forced change in Eastern Europe. He therefore hopes that a way can be found to meet the legitimate worries of other Government Departments without laying ourselves open to the charge of undue secrecy.

I am copying this letter to the private secretaries of the members of EA, to John Colston (Defence) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely

Dominic Asquith

Dominic Asquith
Private Secretary to
The Rt Hon William Waldegrave

Roger Bright Esq
Private Secretary to the
Secretary of State for the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 3EB

CONFIDENTIAL

ENV AFFAIRS - and Land Pt 13

File

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER ①

MISC 141: THE ENVIRONMENT

Misc 141 meets next on Thursday: you may like to look at the (very bulky) papers over the weekend. This is not as bad as it looks because Richard Wilson has provided a summary Cabinet Office paper, which he has formally submitted to Misc 141. These papers are at Flag A. Carolyn Sinclair has also provided a helpful paper, which is at Flag B.

These point out the central dilemma that the UK is very unlikely to be able to meet international pressures to reduce CO2 levels without radical action which would affect electricity privatisation and transport policy.

This dilemma is the more acute because of difficulties in timing. Carolyn in her paper argues that we should not take action which would damage our competitiveness and so should only act internationally. But the pathfinder and final prospectuses for the electricity privatisation are to be floated in the autumn. Any policy changes which affect the privatisation should be declared by then (or the privitisation might be put at risk) but the Second World Climate Conference is in October/November. The Cabinet Office paper says that further work is needed to consider just how great a problem that is.

A related issue is whether the UK should press to take the lead in coordinating the analysis of options at the next IPCC on 5-8 February - as proposed by Chris Patten at Flag C. Carolyn advises at Flag D in favour of doing so. But one wonders how wise it is to take the lead in an area at this stage when it is unclear what options we want or are in a position to take ourselves.

Thankyou - we shall need a lot of time for this meeting. MT

CMS

Caroline Slocock
26 January 1990

PRIME MINISTER 26 January 1990

MISC 141: CONTROL OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The paper before MISC 141 sets out the best scientific assessment of the threat of global warming as the result of the build up of greenhouse gases, and puts forward possible policy responses. These need to be considered in the light of our existing international commitments and the likely pressure we will come under at future international meetings.

The covering paper rightly points up the conflict between the prudent policies indicated by the weight of scientific evidence; and current policies on electricity privatisation and transport.

Scientific consensus on global warming

There is a growing international scientific consensus that a 0.1°C per decade increase in average global temperature is the maximum compatible with the avoidance of serious environmental damage. If no action is taken to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, scientists believe we will exceed an increase of 0.1°C per decade probably some time in the next century. Stabilisation of global carbon dioxide emissions at about current levels is thought to be necessary to meet the temperature criterion.

Relative importance of greenhouse gases

The main greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide, methane and CFCs. Their contribution to global warming is as follows:

	Contribution to global warming
Carbon dioxide	49%
Methane	18%
CFCs	17%

International consideration

The framework for negotiating reductions in carbon dioxide emissions was set at Noordwijk last November. There has been no international discussion of methane. We have already agreed to phase out CFCs so these are not discussed further in the MISC 141 paper, though we need to ensure that we get due credit for what we have done on this front.

At Noordwijk we and other industrialised countries agreed that we should stabilize carbon dioxide emissions as soon as possible. The levels at which each country should stabilize, and the target date for achieving stabilisation, are to be considered by the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) this year. We will come under pressure to sign up to specific targets at the Second World Climate Conference in October/November 1990.

Global targets blessed by the IPCC will have a sound scientific base. We may face pressure to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions globally at 1990 levels. The target date for achieving stabilisation will probably be 2000 or 2020. We cannot assume that it will be enough for us to stabilize our own emissions at our own 1990 levels. Developing countries may press for the industrialised countries to make a disproportionate contribution ie to reduce their levels below those obtaining in 1990.

Implications for UK

While noting that we may be pressed to do more, the MISC 141 paper takes as a working assumption the achievement of 1990 levels of carbon dioxide and methane emissions by either 2000 or 2020. It looks at what would be needed to achieve these levels.

CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS

	Contribution to CO_2 emissions Million tonnes of carbon (mtc)
Non-transport energy sector	129
Transport	34
Total	163

Non-transport energy sector

Current forecasts of UK carbon dioxide emissions from the energy sector are as follows:

	1990	2000	2020
		mtc	
High energy prices	128	156	202
Low energy prices		161	181

Depending an economic growth and energy prices, we would need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions:

- by between 28-33 mtc to reach 1990 levels by 2000;
- by between 53-74 mtc to reach 1990 levels by 2020.

Measures which could reduce carbon dioxide emissions from the energy sector are:

- energy efficiency measures over and above those assumed in the forecast;
- switching from coal to gas for electricity generation;
- using nuclear power and renewable sources of energy;

- developing abatement technologies to remove carbon dioxide.

Table 3 in the Cabinet Office note shows the possible savings in carbon dioxide which could result from action in each of these areas. It would be necessary to take some difficult decisions to reach 1990 levels by 2000 for example, on energy prices and greater use of nuclear power. The MISC 141 paper argues that securing the maximum possible contribution from the measures in Table 3 by 2000 would:

- damage flotation of the electricity supply industry;

- impose heavy costs on the economy (of the order of £500m - £1000m a year).

Transport

Catalytic converters will reduce greenhouse gases other than carbon dioxide by 75 per cent over about 10 years. The MISC 141 paper therefore concentrates on carbon dioxide.

Current forecasts of UK carbon dioxide emissions from the transport sector - overwhelmingly road traffic - are:

	1990	2000	2020
		mtc	
Low traffic forecast	30	37	40
High traffic forecast		46	60

Depending on traffic growth, which in turn depends on economic growth, we would need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions:

- by between 7-16 mtc to reach 1990 levels by 2000;

- by between 10-30 mtc to reach 1990 levels by 2020.

The table on emissions from the transport sector in the Cabinet Office note lists a number of measures which could reduce emissions. These cannot simply be added up, but the table shows even if these measures were exploited to the full it would be virtually impossible to stabilize at 1990 levels by 2000.

METHANE

In the UK there are four main sources of methane:

agriculture	-	33%
coal mining	-	29%
landfill waste sites	-	21%
gas venting & leakage	-	17%

Even if no action is taken, emissions are expected to fall somewhat by 2020. This is because of the expected decline in methane from agriculture, reflecting changing diet and increased productivity.

Total UK emissions could be reduced by 20% below 1990 levels by 2020, mainly by making electricity from the methane produced in landfill waste disposal sites.

COMMENT

The MISC 141 paper brings out the key role of energy prices in stimulating energy efficiency:

- an increase in energy prices is seen as an essential stimulant to energy efficiency savings in the non transport sector;

- an increase in fuel prices is also needed to stimulate further development of fuel efficient cars, and to make alternative non-fossil fuels begin to look commercially attractive.

Energy efficiency measures in both the transport and non-transport sectors are among the most politically attractive (or least unattractive) options available to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide. It would be worth considering options, such as higher taxation of gas-guzzling cars, which would encourage energy efficiency. These could be made RPI-neutral and - if adopted throughout the EC - would not damage international competitiveness to any serious extent, since other industrial countries would be under pressure to take similar action.

There is scope for the UK to take the initiative in the EC in proposing measures to encourage energy efficiency. We could take credit for something which is likely to be pressed on us anyway.

Electricity privatisation

This dogs the discussion in two respects:

(a) on present plans the issue of pathfinder and final prospectuses will straddle the Second World Climate Conference in October/November. This constrains our negotiating stance at that conference.

(b) there is no real incentive for suppliers of electricity to promote energy efficiency. The assumption that successful privatisation requires the market to believe that demand is going to increase also constrains government action to encourage energy efficiency.

On (a), officials have been asked to do further work urgently to see how far we can reconcile our privatisation objectives with our negotiating needs.

On (b), it would be worth asking John Wakeham how far the need to promote energy efficiency can be reconciled with successful flotation of the electricity industry. John Wakeham is said to be less convinced than his officials that it is now too late to do anything in this area, and is under pressure from Chris Patten to consider options such as changing the pricing formula, or giving electricity a "green dowry" on the model used in water privatisation.

Roads programme

Not all colleagues will necessarily accept the arguments in paragraphs 20-25 of Annex E to the MISC 141 paper that a reduction in the road building programme would not be helpful in dealing with emissions. The Dutch have just committed themselves to cutting back on road building for environmental reasons.

Conclusions

The figures in the MISC 141 paper suggest that the UK would have considerable difficulty in signing up to a commitment which would oblige us to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions at our own 1990 levels by 2000.

The next step should be for officials to draw up a composite list of options for reducing emissions from both the transport and non-transport sectors. Easier and quicker measures should be listed first. Scientific thinking will evolve over the next few years and it would be foolish to be over-hasty in adapting the economy.

There are strong political arguments for being seen to be whole-hearted about energy saving - whether in factories, houses or cars. Some action on prices seems inevitable. It need not be inflationary, but the UK cannot afford to act in isolation.

The continuation of the present road building programme is questioned by many environmentalists. The arguments for more roads need to be compelling. The unwillingness of officials to give up plans for which they have got hard-won money should not be allowed to settle the matter. Cecil Parkinson should be probed on this.

Recommendations

- The weight of the international scientific consensus about global warming makes it prudent to take steps to reduce man-made emissions of greenhouse gases, especially CO_2.

- There is no point in the UK acting alone, and doing so would harm our international competitiveness.

- Energy efficiency is one of the most promising areas for action in concert with EC and other trading partners. Some increase in prices - which need not be immediate or inflationary - seems essential to spur industry and individuals into energy conservation.

- People will not readily understand a conflict between encouraging energy efficiency and privatising the electricity industry. Can we not do more to give theprivatised electricity industry an incentive to encourage energy efficiency?

- Officials should now draw up a composite list of energy saving measures in both the transport and non-transport sectors.

- More difficult measures - especially those involving prices - should be put at the end of the list. Scientific thinking will evolve over the next few years, and we should not be over-hasty in adapting the economy to reduce the risk of global warming.

- The road building programme is a major focus for criticism by environmentalists. Are our defences really robust to argument?

Carolyn Sinclair

CAROLYN SINCLAIR

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-276 3000

My ref

Your ref

The Rt Hon Malcolm Rifkind QC MP
Secretary of State
Scottish Office
Dover House
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2AU

24 January 1990

Dear Secretary of State

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BILL

I wrote to you on 22 December concerning the re-instatement of a power to require submission and revision of waste disposal and recycling plans by specified dates.

Your officials and mine have considered further the implications of re-instatement. I can now agree that such provisions should be introduced in Committee as an amendment to the Bill.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, other members of H Committee and Sir Robin Butler.

CHRIS PATTEN
(approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence)

Env Affairs
Acid Rain Pt B.

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

I am sorry to come back to you on these papers but - having consulted widely here and spoken to Richard Wilson - I am having difficulty in tracking down the past papers on the points to which you referred:

- the appointment of an Energy Efficiency Adviser. The closest to this that I have been able to find is at Flag A - but there is no reference to such an Adviser;

- the instruction that environmental matters be taken into account when proposing new policies. I understand that Sir Terence Heiser proposed this idea to Mr Patten, who may have mentioned it to you. But there is nothing I, Cabinet Office or DOE can find giving any formal instruction.

Do you remember the context or the timing of these proposals?

This was my proposed alternative to the DOE Environmental Review about which I am very sceptical. Sorry I did not make it clear.

CDS

Caroline Slocock
24 January 1990

Cecil Parkinson said one day in Cabinet that he intended to do that (i.e. appoint an advisor in director) to look into the performance of government departments.

cc PK
PU

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01 276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

23 January 1990

The Rt Hon Douglas Hurd MP
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AL

Dear Foreign Secretary

INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

One of the issues for consideration at the meeting of the IPCC in Washington (February 5-8) will be how to take forward work on remits given by the Dutch ministerial conference in Noordwijk.

Of these remits, the most sensitive is the analysis of options for international emissions targets, consideration of which the ministerial conference accepted was now timely.

The issues to be considered will not focus primarily on what the global target for emissions should be. In my view, that should flow from an assessment of the scientific evidence and should be a matter for Ministers at the Second World Climate Conference. But if there is to be a 'global target', there should be a basis for allocating shares of that target to individual countries. It is also necessary to define such targets and identify the practical issues concerned with how they are to be measured and, if necessary, enforced. Naturally, any effective international regime on these matters will have significant implications for this country and we would be foolish not to seek to ensure that our views on these matters are effectively introduced into international discussions.

There are essentially two options open to the IPCC for handling this work. They could invite an existing working group - the Energy and Industry Sub Group - to add these matters to its remit. This group is chaired by the Japanese and has active participation from our own Department of Energy. It suffers somewhat, however, from being confined to fairly formal meetings and from having no full-time secretariat, and its report is being prepared on a fairly ad-hoc basis.

The alternative model, which has been used successfully for a number of other exercises, notably the development of thinking on a framework climate convention, is to seek to entrust development of the work to a small number of countries which would take on the task of coordinating the views of all the key players in the IPCC and of reporting back with proposals reflecting the best consensus and the main variants, for consideration by the IPCC as a whole.

In my view this second model is a more flexible one. It allows progress to be made in a series of bilateral meetings rather than a restricted number of formal committee meetings. I strongly support this approach in relation to emission targets and I suggest our representatives at IPCC be asked to press the case for it.

Assuming we are successful, the question arises of which countries should take on the task of coordinating this work. There are conflicting opinions here. The role of topic coordinator can put pressure on the countries concerned to identify themselves with any emerging consensus. On the other hand they are uniquely placed to influence that consensus and ensure that all relevant considerations are introduced into the formative stages of discussion. It is that which leads me to suggest that the UK should try to become a coordinator for this work. I believe that as a result of the reasoned approach we took at the Noordwijk Conference there is every chance that our candidature would be acceptable both to countries, like the UK and Japan, and to those who are pressing for earlier firmer action, like the Dutch. On balance, it seems to me that we are better on the inside helping to formulate the policy options, rather than on the outside with little influence over what emerges. I propose therefore that we should both promote the idea of a new topic coordination group and put the UK forward as a coordinator.

In view, however, of the major implications of taking such a forward position, I accept that it will be necessary for colleagues to agree that this represents the best way forward. I am therefore copying this to the other members of MISC 141 and to Sir Robin Butler. If necessary, it may be that there should be some discussion at the meeting on 1 February before our delegation leaves for the IPCC.

Yours sincerely

RB

CHRIS PATTEN

(approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence)

CONFIDENTIAL

A

cc - Mr Wilson
Sir R Butler

CABINET OFFICE
A 715
22 JAN 1990
FILING INSTRUCTIONS
FILE No. .....

P 03609

MISS SLOCOCK
through Sir Robin Butler

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

WITH CAS?

You asked for advice on Roger Bright's letter of 19 January, which covers a draft minute which Mr Patten proposes to send to the Prime Minister.

2. The draft minute proposes that each Minister responsible for a Department should carry out an environmental review of its policies and operations. Drawing on experience of a similar "environmental audit" in DOE, he suggests that this exercise could identify scope for:

i. better presentation of the environmental aspects of current policies and achievements;

ii. new ideas which could improve the environmental impact of policies;

iii. better environmental housekeeping, for example by building "green" objectives into procurement policies.

Annex A gives some examples of the output from the DOE exercise. It appears to have produced some useful if modest development of existing policy, without major changes.

3. It will be important to ensure that the proposal does not become a bureaucratic paperchase or impose an undue burden on Departments. First soundings at official level indicate that Departments think the exercise should be manageable, although it will mean more work for those which are not represented on MISC 141 and have not already begun work on the issues.

At my meeting of Permanent Secretaries last week reaction to the idea was reasonably positive.

CONFIDENTIAL

4. There are two other potential risks that need to be watched:

i. that the exercise will be used as a vehicle for public expenditure bids. The Prime Minister may want to suggest a general presumption that the reviews should be conducted within existing resources;

ii. that if the reviews become public there will be pressure for publication of the results with different Ministers taking a different line on environmental policy. It may be best not to divulge their existence in advance of the White Paper in September.

5. Subject to these points, this seems a modest but sensible proposal. MISC 141 will of course look at the major policy issues in the environment field. But many other Departmental policies and programmes affect the environment. A comprehensive series of reviews could, if carried out in the right spirit, identify useful options for inclusion in the White Paper, and avoid any criticism that the Government had failed to set its own house in order environmentally.

6. If the Prime Minister agrees, you may wish to reply to Mr Bright accordingly.

RTJW.

R T J WILSON
Cabinet Office
22 January 1989

The main risk I see is that this exercise will become known and each Department will be asked what the result of its own review has been. I suggest that it should be made clear at the outset that this exercise is simply part of the Government's review of environmental policy and that the results will be incorporated in the White Paper.

FER.B.
22.1.

Prime Minister CCPU.

UBS
26/1

MAFF

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HH
01-270 8709/8667

From the Minister's Private Office

Paul Gray Esq
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1

22 January 1990

Dear Paul

GREENPEACE ACID RAIN CAMPAIGN - "MARGARET'S FAVOURITE PLACES"

In October Greenpeace UK published a document "Margaret's Favourite Places" which purported to show that trees in places with which the Prime Minister has been associated are suffering and dying from the effect of atmospheric pollution. A copy of the document is enclosed.

Conscious of the Prime Minister's keen interest in the relationships between trees, climatic changes and atmospheric pollution, the Forestry Commission instructed one of their scientists to examine the trees featured in the Greenpeace document. A copy of his report is attached. You will see from this that some of the trees are in a sad condition but that this has much more to do with their ages and with changed site conditions than with acid rain.

The report ties in almost exactly with the conclusions reached independently by the Scientific Branch of DOE's Air Quality Division, and amounts to a rebuttal of the Greenpeace claims.

Yours sincerely

Andy

A J Lebrecht
Principal Private Secretary

HRP

My ref: 279.61

GREENPEACE - "MARGARET'S FAVOURITE PLACES"

1. General.

Of the 8 sites illustrated in "Margaret's Favourite Places" I visited 4 on 23rd and 30th October 1989. In addition the cemetery trees mentioned under the entry for Finchley (page 7) were examined.

The trees illustrated stand either close to public highways or they are readily accessible, but as far as I could ascertain the authorities and owners had not been approached and no detailed assessments had been made.

2. Yew Trees Magdalen College, Oxford (inspected 23rd October).

The yew trees on the bank of the River Cherwell (page 4) at the rear of Magdalen College are but 2 of many trees of this species in the vicinity. The presence of a range of sizes and considerable natural regeneration suggests that the site is well suited for the species.

The 2 trees illustrated stand in an area of York stone paving constructed, it is said by the local staff, on a 100 mm thick layer of concrete. In order to level the river bank and create a terrace the river wall has been raised about 600 mm and then infilled. The stems of the 2 yew trees have been protected from this increased soil level with sectional concrete "sewer rings" about 1.3 m diameter. Prior to the site works, which were completed in spring 1989 the trees stood in more natural surroundings of riverside vegetation. However there was a shed over part of the root area.

Shoot growth of the 2 trees has been regular and comparable with that of adjacent trees standing in open ground. Also all of the yew trees in the area were carrying up to 5 years needles. However the subject trees were heavily clothed with flower buds. The crowns of the trees on either side of the Cherwell appeared equally dense from a distance but the pictured trees were slightly sparser when viewed from beneath. The branch tips of the 2 trees were ascending giving a rather ragged outline.

Apart from the density of the flower buds and foliage the trees in the vicinity of Magdalen College appeared very comparable. However the sudden and severe change in the site conditions around the 2 trees is likely to suffocate the roots and lead to their death. As such loss of needles and dieback may be expected, while in the longer term the trees may be expected to die.

Notes

i. The tree in the thumbnail illustration showing 90% defoliation has a very atypical form and size for a yew - I suspect it is not a yew.

ii. This inspection was made accompanied by Professor F R Whatley, Plant Sciences Department.

3. Beech Tree - Central Park, Dartford (inspected 30th October 1989)

This beech tree (page 6) is described as "relatively young" but its breast height girth (2.02 m) and height (approximately 20 m) suggest that the tree is mature. The only other trees of this species and size in the park were the adjacent tree on the boundary (the south) (about 10 m tall) and across the park there is a very large Fern-leaf beech (2.27 m girth, approximately 15 m tall and with an average branch spread of 17 m).

The tree illustrated appeared to be free from defects and disease. However there was considerable twig death especially to the east of the crown, but the amount of dead wood within the crown was not exceptional. Some shoots appeared to have grown considerably more than the others in 1989 - the result is a somewhat ragged outline to the crown. The crown appeared well clothed with healthy buds. The only evidence of recent site changes was the new chainlink fence touching the root buttress on the east. Close to the base of the tree a concrete post and 2 strainers (visible in the illustration) had been dug-in. The remains of an earlier fence were visible protruding from the bark of the stem.

From the lack of truly comparable beech in the area and the poor growth of the sycamore along the eastern boundary I suspect the low lying area occupied by the park may be subject to periodic fluctuation in water level.

4. Sycamore - Willow Walk, Grange Estate, Finchley, N.12 (inspected 30th October 1989)

As can be seen from the illustration (page 7) this mature tree (1.96 m girth, approximately 16 m tall) has been surrounded by buildings (estimated to be 30 plus years old) and hard paving some of which was in a poor state of repair and water was ponding. The nearest and only open soil (grass) is 5 metres away on the north and 9 metres to the south. To the east there is a sub-station/junction box and a payphone, both are within the branch spread of the tree.

The base of the stem looked as though the soil level may have been raised many years ago - possibly when the paving was constructed. Within the crown there is a major wound where a leading shoot broke out many years ago - the wound is callusing but decay is present in the wood. It was not possible to examine the wound in detail or assess the extent of decay. Several of the branches/twigs in the upper crown appear to have lost some bark. At least 2 branches looked as if they had been pollarded at about 13 metres.

This tree appeared to be dying back - a condition I would expect to be progressive in view of the inhospitable soil conditions. The crown looks very ragged because of the loss of the large central shoot years ago combined with the dieback.

5. Lime Avenues - St.Pancras and Islington Cemeteries (inspected 30th October 1989)

Under the heading "Finchley" (page 7) attention is drawn to the condition of the "striking lime avenues" in these cemeteries. There are two main avenues (Central Avenue and East Road) both of which are pollarded trees.

The trees on Central Avenue are very large (about 25 m tall) and most have been pollarded many years ago. As a result the regrowth shoots have passed the stage of vigorous vegetative growth - they are now developing a hierarchy of dominance etc. The crowns of these trees are beginning to look ragged but shoot growth continues at about 375 mm per year.

The pollarding of the younger trees on East Road has been done more recently. The crowns of regrowth shoots appear symmetrical and vigorous.

In the southern boundary of the entrance to the Cemeteries there are a number of mature trees. The lime tree nearest to the entrance gate has suffered very extensive physical damage - possibly in 1987. As a result the crown, which is readily visible from the main road, appeared very much in decline. Nevertheless shoot growth is similar to that of other trees.

On the north boundary of the entrance to the Cemeteries adjacent to the entrance there is a row of what appeared to be middle-aged limes looking in splendid form having been pollarded and then crown thinned relatively recently. In contrast the lime, sycamore and ash trees fronting the adjacent St. Pancras Court (a residential block) had very restricted shoot growth. However the soil level had been raised around their bases a number of years ago.

Overall the trees in the Cemeteries appeared to be healthy and their crowns reflected management practices rather than declining vigour or damage.

6. Horse chestnut - 23 Hambledon Place, Dulwich, SE21 (inspected 30th October 1989)

The tree illustrated (page 8) is one of many retained in the frontage and within this mid-eighties residential development.

The Horse chestnut stands in the rear garden of number 23 approximately 8 metres from the corner of the house. To the north there is a 2 metre high brick wall which passes 1 metre from the tree. The upper wall appeared new but the foundations may pre-date the development although from the line of the wall this seems unlikely.

All of the trees on this frontage are in decline - the gardener said there was need for regular removal of dead wood. A Turkey oak in the garden of number 22 (?) and the lime adjacent to the garage extension of number 1 were in much more stress - undoubtedly resulting from site alterations.

The Horse chestnut illustrated appeared to be dying back. The twigs at the apex of the crown are without buds and the other twigs carried only small buds.

The condition of the trees was typical of that found on so many other occasions where there has been a very sudden change in site conditions as a result of development work. Some of the trees may gradually recover but I suspect that the illustrated tree is unlikely to do so.

Note: The text indicates that Hambledon Place is in SW15 when it is actually in SE21.

7. Conclusion

Of the sites examined all but the beech tree in the Dartford Park had evidence of man's recent interference. From observation of trees on other development sites the condition of those trees illustrated did not differ materially.

The beech tree at Dartford appears in the photograph to have a very dense healthy canopy of foliage. However the condition of the trees in the park as a whole suggest a possible environmental factor is implicated.

DEREK PATCH
Arboricultural Advisory & Information Officer

31 October 1989

Margaret's
favourite
places

Margaret's *favourite* places

A pictorial tour of life during Margaret Thatcher's leadership

"We are in the business of planting trees for our children and grandchildren, or we have no business to be in politics at all."

Margaret's *favourite* places

October 1989

Dear Mrs Thatcher,

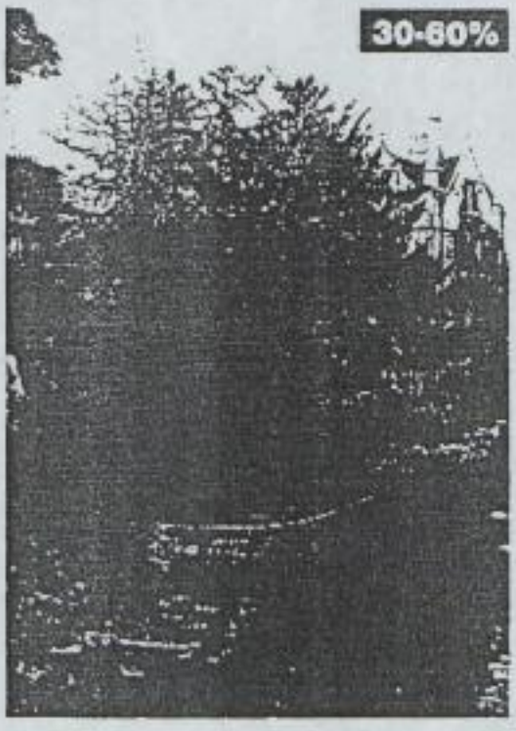
You're probably far too busy to take much notice of the state of the trees in some of your favourite places. But we'd like you to spare a moment for a closer look at some of the once healthy specimens that have surrounded you during your lifetime. Sadly, we have to report that the majority of those we assessed are unlikely to outlive your children, let alone your grandchildren. In a broader sense, these few examples reflect the poor state of many other trees species in Britain. In fact, a recent United Nations survey said that our trees were the most unhealthy in Western Europe. To reverse this frightening decline in tree health, we believe an immediate and comprehensive reduction in air pollution is vital. Knowing your love of trees and the symbolism they hold for you, we hope you'll encourage your Government to act now to ensure the continuity of our heritage

Andrew Tickle

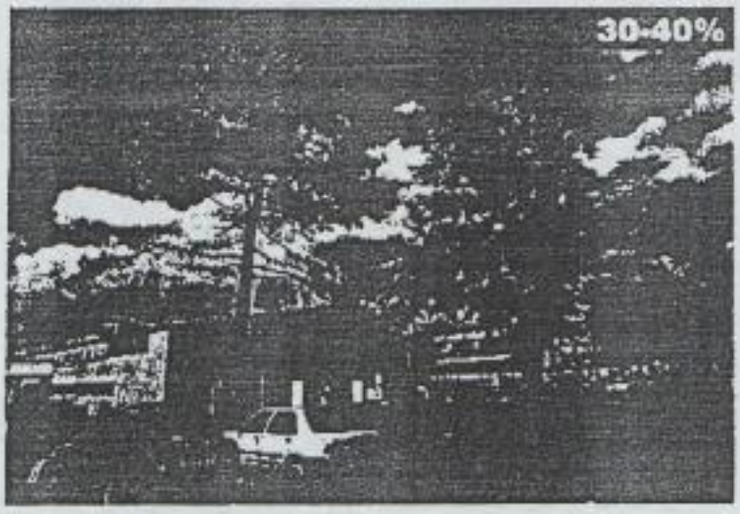
The early years

Grantham: Here on North Parade, only yards from Margaret Thatcher's home, a common lime is suffering from over 70% of foliation of its leaves. The damage to this tree is not only reflected by this year's sparse foliage, but also by extensive crown dieback which represents a steady decline in the tree's health in recent years. Lime's seem to be in particularly poor condition this year, with many showing defoliation, twig dieback and extensive areas of leaf yellowing and brownine

Oxford: Two specimens of one of Britain's foremost heritage trees, the common lime, stand next to the River Cherwell at the back of Magdalen College. These trees have suffered between 30-60% needle loss and both are sending out abnormal new growth. Often twigs are compensate for their loss of natural foliage. An extensive survey of tree health over Southern England last year by Greenpeace showed 74% of the 120 trees examined had lost over a quarter of their usually dense foliage



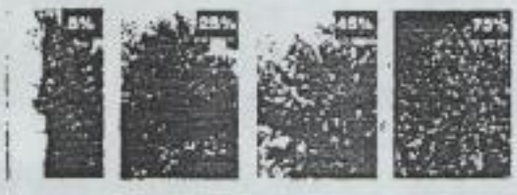
Manning tree: A lone Corsican pine and common lime dominate the entrance to the former British Xylonite Plastic factory (now Wardell Stores), which employed Margaret Thatcher as a research chemist. Both trees have lost over a third of their natural foliage when compared with healthy specimens. In the Forestry Commission's Main Survey of last year, over 50% of nearly two thousand Scots pines examined were found to have lost over a quarter of their needles. [30-40%] ⇨

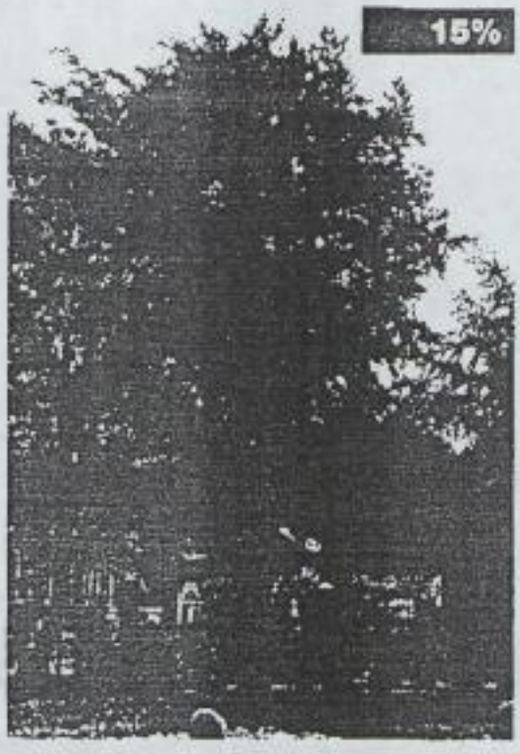


"Trees represent strength, growth and stability throughout the ages"

"Margaret Thatcher [illegible] Women Within
Andrew Thomson [illegible]

Dartford: In the town's central Park, not far from where the Thatchers first met, a relatively young beech is already showing signs of decline. Although the foliage is for the most part still intact, tell-tale branching abnormalities combined with dead twigs in the crown show that the tree is in a stagnant phase of growth. Even given favourable conditions of growth from now on, the tree is unlikely to recover to full health.

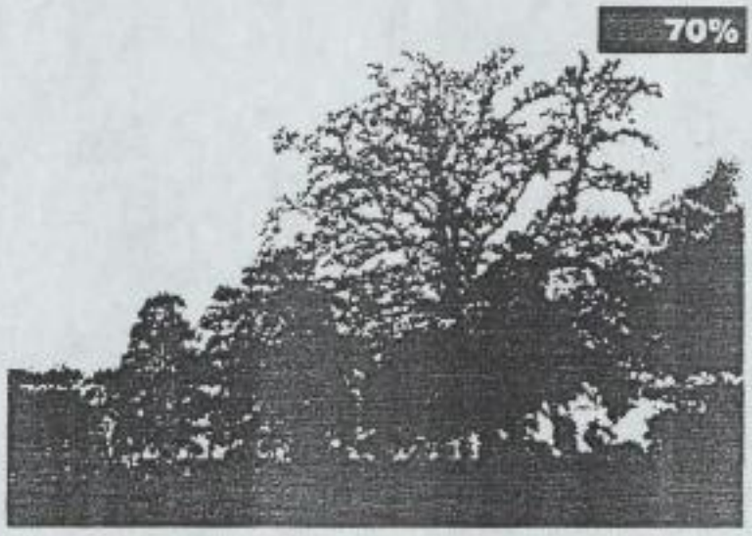




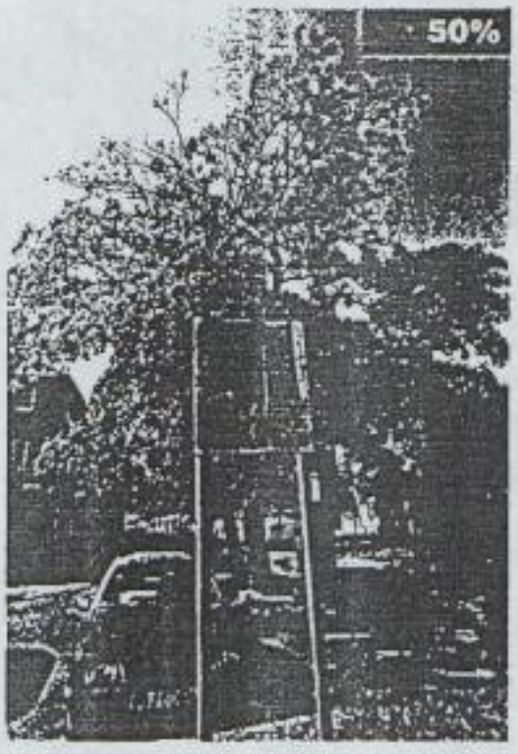
"I like lots of trees"

Margaret Thatcher and Finchley Constituent

Parliament: This Hungarian oak overlooking London's skyline has lost over 70% of this year's leaves and is becoming "stagheaded" through the loss of its fine branch structure and "water shoots" appearing directly from the old wood. Margaret Thatcher has very fond memories of Parliament Hill Fields, which she visited on one of her earliest trips from Grantham 92>



Finchley: In front of the Grange Estate where Margaret Thatcher often attends the Women Caterers' annual Christmas party, a sycamore is showing extensive defoliation, die-back and yellowing of its few remaining leaves. Other ancient trees within the constituency are markedly unhealthy: these include chestnuts in Finchley Park and in the grounds of the nearby Memorial Hospital, and most of the once striking avenues of limes in the St. Pancras and Islington cemeteries, opposite the Grange Estate 92>



"the planting of trees symbolises the long-term side of society that she wants to create"

"Margaret Thatcher - the Woman Within"
Andrew Thomson, 1989

This is not supposed to be a scientific survey. A number of surveys into Britain's trees have been carried out. Greenpeace themselves commissioned an independent analysis of the health status of beech, oak and yew – three native tree species important in our heritage woodland. The results, although depressing, were not unexpected: nearly 40% of the beech, over 50% of oaks and nearly 75% of the yew surveyed were found to be damaged, having lost over a quarter of their normal foliage.

The Forestry Commission's own national Main Survey in the same year found the situation to be worse: out of two thousand trees surveyed, 50% of beech examined were damaged as were 60% of the oaks (yew is not included in their surveys). The Forestry Commission also carry out a second, much smaller survey which is reported to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE). The results of this survey, which puts each country into an international "league table", were published in July.

>25% Trees in the United Kingdom were found to be in the worst condition in Western Europe, with a quarter of the trees examined having moderate to severe defoliation.

>25% In all the UN ECE countries, only Czechoslovakia was found to have worse damage.

In the UK air pollution is considered to be a factor contributing to the weakening of forest health.

Dr John Innes, the scientist who co-ordinates the surveys for the Forestry Commission, recently attacked the UN ECE survey findings for oak in particular as "totally crude and completely scientifically unsustainable". This was because the UN ECE survey findings were based on only 132 oak trees. However the Forestry Commission also carried out their own Main Survey which is based on a much larger sample of trees. Out of the 1200 oaks examined, they found 66% of the trees to be seriously defoliated, compared to 44% in the UN ECE survey.

Most scientists and forest experts working in the field of tree health believe that pollutant reductions will improve tree health. Even the Forestry Commission in their evidence in 1988 to the House of Commons Select Committee on the Environment stated that "the effects [of pollutant reductions] can be expected to be positive for the health of trees and woodland ecosystems".

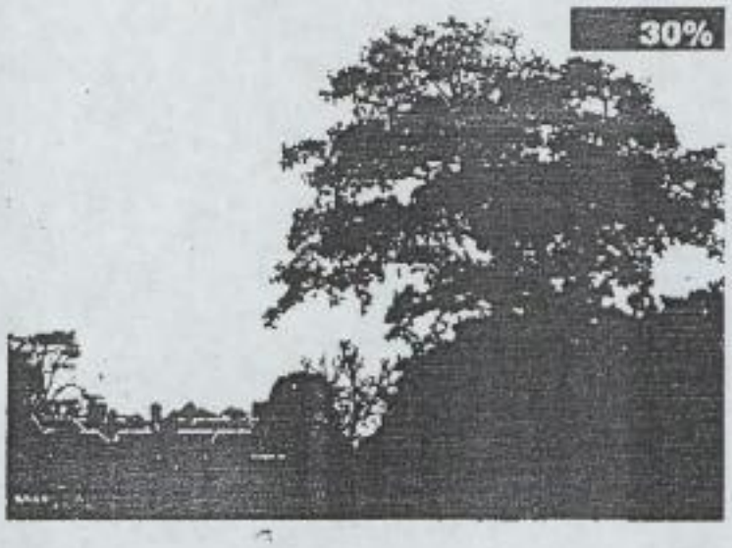
In the same Select Committee enquiry, the Department of the Environment's Chief Scientist, Dr David Fish concluded that "if another year's decrease in tree health is recognised... then it would be ... an issue of some serious concern". Yet the UN ECE results released in July this year showed just such a decrease in health from 1987, when 44% of all UK trees showed no signs of defoliation compared with the figure of 37% in 1988.

Trees decline for a number of reasons, of which air pollution is but one. The other natural factors - drought, frost, attacks of pests and pathogens are however beyond our control. Air pollution is not.

The presently proposed programme of pollutant reduction in this country is inadequate to protect tree health in the short term. Only one fossil fuel power station out of more than forty in the UK will be cleaned up in the next five years. The current growth in car numbers also threatens to completely offset the benefits of the stringent catalytic converter technology which will become mandatory on new cars in 1992. In addition, the problems of a new class of pollutants - volatile organic compounds - have yet to be addressed. These form low level ozone which is damaging to both human and forest health in relatively small quantities.

Premier and beyond.

Chequers: Along the main drive of Chequers and within the plain view of the house itself is this English oak. It has lost about 30% of its foliage and its upper crown is dying back. Chequers and especially its outside environs is one of Margaret Thatcher's favourite places for relaxing. At other sites nearby, 50% of the oaks examined last year in a survey conducted for Greenpeace had lost over a quarter of their foliage. Chequers lies within the Chilterns, one of the largest areas of conservationally valuable beechwoods in the country; the same survey showed that a quarter of the beech surveyed had entered into decline.



Dulwich: This severely defoliated horse chestnut dominates Hambledon Place SW19, the Thatchers' South London retirement home. Chestnuts are normally known for their extremely dense crowns. Many of the trees surrounding the estate, including oaks and beech, are in a similarly poor state of health. The recent disturbance of the ground when the houses were built will not have improved their chances of returning to full health.

EXCLUSIVE: HORRIFIC TOLL ON OUR COUNTRYSIDE

Tragedy of acid rain on sick Britain

By JOANNA SHELDON

A DAILY MAIL ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGN

What are we doing to our trees?

by JUNE SOUTHWORTH

'They become ghosts you can see through'

Hearts of oak threatened by pollution

By Gordon Martin in Geneva

HEARTS OF OAK are unde[illegible] greater threat in Britain from pollution and other cause[illegible] than anywhere else in Europe according to a United Nation[illegible] survey.

The results of the survey, [illegible] which 25 European countries took part in, has been published by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

The countries are among the 35 signatories of the Conventio[illegible] on Long-Range Transbound[illegible]

Britain's trees among sickest in Europe, says UN

By Richard Savill

TREES IN Britain are among the most damaged in Europe according to a United Nations report published yesterday which lists air pollution as one of the contributing factors to forest damage. About 37 per cent [illegible] Britain's conifers are sick, a higher percentage than any other European country, according to the UN Economic and Social Council report.

Broadleaved trees, such as oak, beech, ash and sycamore are also badly affected.

Only four other nations, Switzerland, West Germany, Holland and Denmark, have fallen more strongly [illegible]

The report [illegible] 36 per cent of all spruces in the [illegible] — 22 per cent of them moderately to severely [illegible] — a higher percentage than in all other European countries except Switzerland, the Netherlands and Denmark.

The report, issued by the Co-operative Program [illegible] and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on [illegible] the [illegible] in 32 European countries.

It said air pollution [illegible] a [illegible] factors in [illegible] Bulgaria, Denmark, [illegible] Sweden and [illegible]

The report [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

Pollution destroying quarter of UK forests

From Frances Williams in Geneva

AIR POLLUTION and insect attacks threaten destruction of a quarter of Britain's forests and nearly two-thirds of its mature oak trees. Forest damage in Britain is greater than in any other European country except Czechoslovakia, according to the results of a 20-nation survey.

The survey, carried out last year, shows that 25 per cent of all [illegible]'s trees had [illegible] leaf loss [illegible]

RECYCLED

GREENPEACE

Photography: Alan Greig
Design: ideology
Andrew Tuddenham Acid Rain
Campaigner at Greenpeace U.K.

B

MISS SLOCOCK

22 January 1990

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

Chris Patten's suggestion that Government Departments should each review their environmental objectives is designed to flush out new ideas which might be included in the White Paper. But the results of the Department of the Environment's own exercise at Annex A are rather disappointing. The Annex is full of words like "accelerate progress", "extend existing good practice" etc. It contains few new policies or new ideas. It is largely about moving faster or spending more money on policies which have already been agreed.

There is a real danger that an exercise of this kind will divert time and energy in Departments for small results. An alternative would be for Chris Patten simply to ask Cabinet colleges whether they can suggest ideas for possible inclusion in the White Paper. How they found the ideas would be for them. Ministers may well be more inventive in their thinking than the results of a bureaucractic trawl.

CAROLYN SINCLAIR

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

Subject to your views, the Secretary of State for the Environment would like to issue the attached minute to colleagues asking each of them to carry out a comprehensive review of the environmental policies of their Departments - a kind of "environmental audit." Mr Patten argues that this would be more far-reaching than the work being carried out by MISC 141 (which is only concentrating on the major issues and does not affect all Departments). And it might bring to light some useful ideas for the White Paper.

I have taken the advice of Richard Wilson and Sir Robin Butler (Flag A) and Carolyn Sinclair (Flag B). They see nothing wrong with the underlying aim. Sir Robin has tested the idea out at his meeting of Permanent Secretaries, who were relatively positive about it. But they are concerned that the exercise should not become too bureaucratic and burdensome, particularly as many Departments are already working hard on papers for Misc 141.

Departments would surely benefit from taking a comprehensive look at the environmental implications of their policies. But it seems to me that this review could divert crucial resources away from the key - and very difficult issues - being looked at by Misc 141, particularly if it becomes too bureaucratic or an end in itself. But if it is to be valuable, some structure to the exercise would be crucial: simply asking Departments to review their policies would run the risk that officials will simply go through the motions.

Richard Wilson and Sir Robin also point out that it is important that:

- the review should be carried out on the understanding that any changes would take place within existing public expenditure limits;

- pressure to publish the results before the White Paper should be avoided. Richard Wilson suggests that existence of the review should not therefore be made known in advance of the White Paper. Taking a slightly different tack, Sir Robin suggests that it should be made clear right at the outset that this exercise is simply part of the the Government's review of the environmental policy and that the results will be incorporated in the White Paper.

Content to make the following points in responding to Mr Patten's draft minute:

- that the review should be carried out with the minimum of bureaucracy, whilst ensuring that it is comprehensive and searching. Close ministerial involvement may be necessary to ensure this?

- that the exercise should be carried out within existing public expenditure limits?

- that the review should complement, rather than cut across, the work being carried out for Misc 141?

- that it will be important to avoid public pressure to publish results before the White Paper. One way of achieving this would be to be to present the exercise as part of the work leading up to the White Paper, the results of which will be incorporated in it in due course?

CAS

Caroline Slocock
22 January 1990

① I agree with Carolyn Sinclair - and am very sceptical. Dot's results were not stunning. Much more to the point ⊕ what happened to the energy efficiency achieve we were going to have ② an instruction that environmental matters be taken into account when proposing new policies not

A CS

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

29 June 1989

Dear David,

CLIMATE CHANGE: NEW PUBLIC SECTOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY CAMPAIGN

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 23 June about the new public sector energy efficiency campaign. She endorses the campaign he proposes, including the intention to identify a Minister responsible for energy use in each Department (she suggests a list should be published) and a commitment to publishing measures of performance, including a league table. She hopes that a date can be specified in advance for publishing targets and figures on energy usage and that these will be reviewed and published each year. She also wonders whether the Efficiency Unit might help in the process of monitoring by carrying out ad hoc audits.

I am copying this to the private secretaries of the recepients of your Secretary of State's minute.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Slocock

CAROLINE SLOCOCK

David Murphy Esq
Department of Energy

file PM

(c: Home/gas)

bc: PU

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

22 January 1990

Dear John,

CONTROL MEASURES FOR ENERGY-RELATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Thank you for your letter of 19 January, which the Prime Minister has seen. She was interested in the details you gave and has asked to see a summary of the US study, which I gather contains the base case, although more work still needs to be done on the policy options. I would be grateful if you could send this over in due course.

I am copying this letter to Richard Gozney (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Duncan Sparkes (H.M. Treasury), Stephen Williams (Welsh Office), Rosalind Cole (Department of Trade and Industry), Uriel Jamieson (Scottish Office), Tricia Rennie (Department of Transport), Alan Ring (Department of the Environment), Michael Harrison (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,

Caroline

CAROLINE SLOCOCK

John Neilson, Esq.,
Department of Energy.

DTI.

CONFIDENTIAL

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

Andrew Turnbull
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

19 January 1990

Dear Andrew

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

I enclose the draft of a minute which, subject to the Prime Minister's views, my Secretary of State would like to send her. It proposes that other Government Departments should carry out the same sort of review of the environmental objectives underlying their policies that we in DOE have done.

I think that the draft is self-explanatory. If the Prime Minister is content, my Secretary of State will minute her in these terms early next week in order to get things moving. But of course my Secretary of State would be happy to discuss this approach with the Prime Minister first if she wished to do so.

I am copying this letter to Sonia Phippard in Sir Robin Butler's office.

Yours sincerely

Roger Bright

R BRIGHT
Private Secretary

CONFIDENTIAL

DRAFT MINUTE TO THE PRIME MINISTER

REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

1. We have identified a major programme of work for MISC 141 on the main issues for the Environment White Paper. But, broad as it is, it cannot provide for a truly exhaustive look at all the issues - some of them secondary, but collectively very important -that we may want to consider for inclusion.

2. I have been struck by the range and diversity of environmental achievements identified by the Cabinet Office exercise just completed. It is a timely reminder of just how much we have achieved in the past decade. However, a recent internal exercise here has persuaded me that in looking forward to the next decade we ought to go slightly wider.

3. Over the past two months I have asked Ministers here to take a systematic look at all DOE policies and programmes and consider what changes could be justified for environmental reasons. This has produced a number of helpful suggestions. Examples are given in Annex A. Not all will be worth pursuing, but many, subject to further discussions here and with other Departments concerned, may be appropriate for inclusion in the White Paper. The outcome of this exercise has been so positive that I should like to suggest a similar look at the environmental aspects of all policies and programmes, not just in Departments represented on MISC 141, but across Government.

4. This exercise has not involved any complex new methodology. We simply took as our starting point the objectives set out in our Management Information System and considered the extent to which environmental concerns might warrant some bending of those objectives. A list of the questions that we applied in the review is at Annex B.

5. I drew a number of lessons from this exercise. First, almost everywhere, we could improve on the language we use to describe our current environmental policies and achievements, and this in itself offers scope to change public perceptions. Secondly, it showed that new ideas were around even in those policy areas where the environment is already a central theme, and that a disciplined exercise of this kind could usefully flush them out. Thirdly, it may be that we could achieve a great deal simply by securing better environmental house-keeping in the way we run our own Departments. Spending on procurement, even excluding defence hardware, runs into the billions.

6. Although some desirable action would carry a cost in staff and public expenditure, it may be that something can be done to improve the potential environmental impact of policies and programmes generally within existing public expenditure limits, and with relatively small start-up costs. And in many areas there were ideas for encouraging people to opt for the better environmental solution by the use of market instruments.

7. Consequently, and with your agreement, I should like to invite colleagues both in MISC 141 and more generally to carry out an environmental review of their own policies. The aim would be for colleagues to let us know the results before we reach general conclusions at Easter on the content of the White Paper. I recognise that it will be easier for Departments represented on MISC 141 to work to this tight timetable as they will already have been considering the implications of environmental issues in their areas, but I should be grateful if other colleagues could see what can be done. Such an exercise should produce valuable material which would strengthen the White Paper itself.

8. My officials would be very ready to explain to their colleagues in other Departments in detail how we tackled our own initial review. I have already asked my officials, in consultation with the Treasury, to consider how best we can draw on the knowledge in DOE and PSA to draft a "best practice" environmental housekeeping guide which could then of use to Departments generally.

9. I am copying this minute to members of MISC 141, to other Ministers in charge of Departments and to Sir Robin Butler.

ANNEX A

EXAMPLES OF PROPOSITIONS EMERGING FROM DOE ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES REVIEW

Environmental protection

Accelerate analysis of existing toxic substances and pesticides to remedy large backlogs in the international testing programme (requires international agreement and would involve MAFF and HSE)

Accelerate progress to eliminate breaches of statutory air quality standards, and sites of severe disability due to air pollution

Ensure rapid implementation of Green Bill measures relating to waste disposal and other topics (involves DTI).

Increase local authority awareness of risks of methane explosion at land waste sites

Apply the new audit role of HMIP to areas where waste disposal standards are low and groundwater is threatened

Consider with MAFF whether further action is needed to reduce incidence of agricultural pollution

Planning

Make regional planning guidance positively reflect environmental objectives

Review existing DOE planning guidance so as to encourage the environmental aspects of proposed developments to be taken into account, but without creating new burdens in the development process

Extend existing good practice so that environmental impact analysis becomes an implicit part of the development process rather than an add-on; with developers identifying environmental aspects of projects requiring mitigation and reaching agreement with local authorities on the best means of mitigation.

Apply environmental assessment to the development plan process, and to programmes having an impact on the environment (subject to discussion with interested departments).

Housing

Carry forward a strategy to achieve the substantial reductions in energy use in the existing private housing stock that are both feasible and practicable, building on the substantial improvements in insulation standards now required of new construction

Promote good practice in urban and building design

Wildlife and Countryside

Encourage farmers and landowners to act in an environmentallly friendly way everywhere, perhaps by widening grant regimes; subject to discussion with MAFF.

Seek in consultation with MAFF to identify agricultural regimes which are both economically viable and environmentally beneficial

Give greater protection to SSSIs and important landscape features, through the planning system; subject to discussion with MAFF

Increase funds available for site protection, woodlands schemes, footpaths etc

Improve compliance with licencing of trade in endangered species

Heritage

Promote a new cathedrals initiative (with the Minister for the Arts), involving English Heritage grants

Give more emphasis to conservation objectives in the English Heritage grant programme.

Strengthen guidance on planning and archaeology, listed buildings and conservation areas

Create a low key conservation forum, dedicated to developing personal involvement in the heritage through education, access to sites etc

Make management of the Royal Parks more explicitly environmentally friendly

Inner cities

Consider with other Departments how to ensure that the economic objectives of inner cities and regional assistance are also environmentally sound (for discussion with DTI, DEmp)

Local government

Promote environmentally sound local authority purchasing and operations, with appropriate use of environmental audits

Require local government to make reports on their environmental achievements

Seek to identify scope for improvement in local government environmental services (litter, parks, refuse etc)

Seek to identify scope for making local government regulatory functions (air, environmental healt etc) more coherent

CONFIDENTIAL

ANNEX B

QUESTIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMME

- to identify the main impact of each policy area on the environment;

- to identify the instruments available for enhancing that impact;

- to suggest environmental aims and objectives attainable within existing policies, costed where possible;

- to consider resource costs within the public sector and burdens on the private sector;

- to identify cross-command interactions within the Department;

- to suggest policy changes - in this or other Departments -that would be useful;

- to comment on standards; and

- to comment on the international dimension.

THE RT HON JOHN WAKEHAM MP

Department of Energy
1 Palace Street
London SW1E 5HE
01 238 3149

Prime Minister 2

You asked for this information when you saw the UK's report.

It looks like the UK has done the most comprehensive study; and that it is going to be difficult to compile a global picture from these reports.

It might be worthwhile to learn more about (x). Would you like to see a summary of it?

Yes please MT 19/1

Caroline Slocock
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

19 January 1990

Dear Caroline,

CONTROL MEASURES FOR ENERGY-RELATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

In your letter of 27 November last year, you asked how other members of the IPCC Energy and Industry subgroup were placed in terms of submitting their own "country studies", such as we had done.

The subgroup has no fixed membership, but nine nations had promised to submit studies, and, of these, six (UK, Australia, France, Japan, USA, and Canada) have done so. Of the other three, West Germany's is nearly finished (and will then need translation), China's may be finished this month, while the timing of completion of the Netherlands' study is uncertain. Some other countries (eg Sweden, Spain) who have made vague noises about producing something have not done so.

Those reports which are available were looked at by a US/Japan Experts Meeting in December: these nations had been given the task of assessing the studies and producing a report for the full subgroup. Such feedback as we have suggests that the UK study is well thought of; the French one is old and not developed; and the US one contains only the base case, with more work still to be done on the policy options. The studies are also inconsistent with each other.

The US has also commissioned two non-Government studies from Laurence Berkely Laboratories, the first covering the USSR and Eastern Bloc, the second leading LDCs, including India, Indonesia, and Brazil. These are at least consistent with each other, but we have no idea if the governments concerned would acknowledge their validity.

Overall, then the UK can at least lay claim to some of the moral high ground, in terms of producing a report at all, of sticking to the timescale originally proposed (ie last September), and of producing everything which we had agreed to do.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

Yours

JOHN NEILSON
Principal Private Secretary

ENV. Acia Rain Pkt 13

mem

c:\wpdocs\foreign\
Syse. mem

cc PC

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

19 January 1990

ROYAL SOCIETY CONFERENCE ON ACID RAIN

Thank you for your letter of 19 January about the request from Mr. Syse for a meeting with the Prime Minister in March. The Prime Minister could manage 1145 on Monday, 23 March. I should be grateful if you could put this to the Norwegians.

CHARLES POWELL

Richard Gozney, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

la

Charles
1145 on
Friday
23 March
AP 19/1

R19/1

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 January 1990

Any hope? (AP is a Conservative)

Dear Charles,

Royal Society Conference on Acid Rain: 19-23 March 1990

The Royal Society is organising a conference from 19-23 March 1990 to present the results of the five year Surface Water Acidification Programme which the Royal Society has run in conjunction with its Norwegian and Swedish equivalents. The highlight of the conference will be a dinner on 22 March to which Mrs Thatcher and the Prime Ministers of Norway and Sweden have been invited. All have accepted provisionally.

We have been asked by the Norwegian Embassy if the Norwegian Prime Minister, Mr Syse, can call on the Prime Minister. We support this request. Mr Syse called on the Prime Minister last February when he was in opposition (your letter of 9 Pebruary). This will be an opportunity to show support for Mr Syse and his Conservative-led coalition.

We understand that Mr Syse would be free to see the Prime Minister at a time convenient to Mrs Thatcher on either the afternoon of 22 March or early morning of 23 March.

The Embassy in Stockholm have taken informal soundings of the Swedes and suggest that Prime Minister Carlsson will not be making a similar bid.

Yours ever,

Richard Gozney

(R H T Gozney)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

From: The Private Secretary

CCR

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
STORMONT CASTLE
BELFAST BT4 3ST

Tel. Belfast (0232) 63011
Telex 74272

R Bright Esq
Private Secretary to
The Secretary of State for the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 3EB

MBPM ans

17 January 1990

Dear Roger

Answer CAS

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of ~~21~~ December 1989 setting out the Environment Secretary's conclusions on the outcome of the consultations on public access to information and seeking comments on 2 additional proposals.

My Secretary of State is content with Mr Patten's view that all monitoring data received by the enforcing authorities as part of their statutory requirements should be included in the public registers. Mr Brooke also agrees with the new proposals for providing a brief statement of the compliance record where for commercial or security reasons the full data has been omitted. There would be no objection to a requirement to make existing information on the state of the environment available.

When the Northern Ireland consultation paper on the introduction of Integrated Pollution Control is being published, Mr Brooke will arrange for these additional matters on public access to information to be included.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of the members of E(A), to Bob Pierce (FCO), John Colston (Defence) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours Sincerely
Maurice Patterson

M PATTERSON

PM/SOFS/1645

ENV AFFAIRS : Acid Rain PTS

19.0 PM 10

SUBJECTED
cc: DRS.
MASTER.

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. 9A/90

THE PRIME MINISTER

Oslo, 18 January 1990

Dear Prime Minister

As you will know, the Norwegian Government will host the Regional Conference on the follow-up to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in the ECE region in Bergen, Norway, from 8 to 16 May. The Conference is organized in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and in consultation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

I have the pleasure of inviting you to give a keynote address at the opening of the Ministerial Session on Monday 14 May. Among other invited speakers during this session are the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Minister of Finance Bernard Chidzero of Zimbabwe and a high-level representative from an East European country. I will personally open the Ministerial Session.

The Bergen Conference will be divided in two parts: a Working Session (8-11 May) and a Ministerial Session (14-16 May). The topics selected for the Conference agenda are the following:

* sustainable economics
* sustainable industry
* sustainable energy
* awareness raising and public participation.

It is expected that between 40 and 50 ministers from the 34 member governments of the ECE will attend, as well as heads of relevant U.N. and other international organizations, including the Executive Secretary of the ECE and the Executive Director of UNEP.

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern Ireland
LONDON

According to the mandate given to the Conference by the ECE, we should aim at

* reviewing progress in the follow-up of selected aspects of the WCED report; and
* identifying initiatives for further measures of relevance to the ECE region.

It is expected that the Conference will lead to the adoption of two documents: an Agenda for Action and a Ministerial Declaration.

A keynote speech from you would add an important dimension to the discussions during the Bergen Conference. I would therefore be very grateful if you could find it possible to come to Bergen to address the Conference.

Yours sincerely,

Jan P. Syse

SD/1528p

NBPM

cc Mr R Wilson
Cabinet Office

AD 15/1

R 16/1.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London SW1A 2NS
Telephone 01 210 3000
From the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health

Miss C Slocock
10 Downing Street
LONDON

15 January 1990

Dear Miss Slocock

AT

WHO CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

You wrote to Helen Shirley-Quirk on 4 December 1989 conveying the Prime Minister's agreement that Roger Freeman should represent the UK at the conference on 'Environment and Health', organised by WHO's European Region and held at Frankfurt on 7-8 December.

The Prime Minister may wish to be aware of the outcome of the conference. A summary note is attached with the final text of the 'Charter on Environment and Health' endorsed by the conference.

Yours sincerely

YSBaxter

YVONNE BAXTER
Private Secretary

WHO CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

FRANKFURT: 7-8 DECEMBER, 1989

Overview

The UK's essential objectives were achieved:

i. the charter was endorsed without any essential changes to the version agreed at the London pre-meeting (other than the agreed changes to reflect the participation of the EC in matters in which it has competence;

ii. the UK's position on the status of the charter, and our reservations about the proposed "European Centre for Environment and Health" were placed clearly on the record.

However the UK's isolation in its luke-warm acceptance of the charter was very apparent.

Detail: The Charter

1. At the opening of the Conference, the Secretariat tabled two changes to the 1 November draft:

i. a "correction" to the Polluter Pays clause (clause 11 of "Principles for Public Policy") to acknowledge UK criticism that the draft did not fairly reflect the outcome of the London meeting;

ii. three amendments relating to the participation of the EC in the conference, in a form acceptable to the UK.

These changes were accepted without discussion.

2. As we had feared a number of delegations arrived with further proposed amendments, including one particularly unhelpful suggestion from France which would have made a reference to "rights" in the preamble. However, it was agreed - first at a meeting of the 12, and then in plenary session - that no further amendments would be accepted, bar some drafting points in the French text. The final agreed text is attached.

Participation

3. In the end, some 29 states (out of a possible 32) from the WHO European Region attended, the three missing being Greece, Rumania and San Marino. Most were represented by 1 minister, with a slight preponderance of health ministers rather than environment. Only 5 countries - Austria, FRG, Hungary, Iceland and Portugal - sent two ministers and several - including France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland - sent none.

Conference Speeches

4. The speeches to the conference - from the president to the FRG Richard von Weizsacker, from senior WHO officials and from the representatives of the 29 countries participating - were largely a formal endorsement of the principles of the charter. Most states expressed enthusiastic support and commitment to put these principles into action. The UK was alone in expressing any

general reservations about the charter although there was a little support (principally from the Netherlands) for our specific reservations about the proposed European Centre. In private conversations at the margins of the conference we got a rather different impression, at least from the developed countries of Western Europe, namely that the charter would make no practical difference to what they were already doing.

5. Detailed points of interest include:

i. Several speakers, including some from prosperous countries in NW Europe, stressed the rising incidence of both respiratory and allergic diseases (which we accept) and attributed this to defects in air quality. (This came as something of a surprise; we are aware of reports from many parts of the world of an increase in allergic disease of unknown origin, but UK data and assessments do not link this to air quality.)

ii. Eastern European countries generally admitted how far they needed to go to catch up with the standards in the West; some (including Yugoslavia and Poland) linked this to an explicit appeal for help from developed to developing countries.

iii. Several speakers linked the present conference to the 1990 Bergen conference and the United Nations Conference on the Environment in 1992.

iv. Some states saw the charter as a useful impetus towards international legislation. Others (noticeably France as well as the UK) saw it merely as "setting out the right problems" while respecting the autonomy of states in solving them.

Next Steps

6. WHO Europe will be preparing three publications of the conference proceedings - the charter itself, a brief report of the proceedings with delegations' speeches, and a comprehensive report. They will also work up detailed proposals on the tasks that fall to them. Participating states were urged to "carry the message back" and to stimulate "serious discussion" of the charter by governments and parliaments.

Press Conference

7. The end of the proceedings were marred for us by a WHO press release which conspicuously drew attention to the UK's isolated position. After UK complaints, the WHO issued a revised press release and sent Mr Freeman a fulsome apology, but the damage had by then been done. The press conference contained a useful and clear statement from Dr Asvall, the WHO Europe regional director, that the charter had only moral and not legal force.

DH/JCD

December 15, 1989

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE

WELT[illegible]INDHEITSORGANISATION
REG[illegible] ALBÜRO FÜR EUROPA

ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTE
BUREAU RÉGIONAL DE L'EUROPE

ВСЕМИРНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ
ЕВРОПЕЙСКОЕ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЕ БЮРО

R =
12-9-89

First European Conference on Environment and Health

Frankfurt, 7-8 December 1989

ICP/RUD 113/Conf.Doc./1 Rev.2
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7 December 1989
ORIGINAL - ENGLISH

EUROPEAN CHARTER ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

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THE EUROPEAN CHARTER ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

PREAMBLE

In the light of WHO's strategy for health for all in Europe, the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development and the related Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond (resolutions 42/187 and 42/186 of the United Nations General Assembly) and World Health Assembly resolution WHA42.26,

Recognizing the dependence of human health on a wide range of crucial environmental factors;

Stressing the vital importance of preventing health hazards by protecting the environment;

Acknowledging the benefits to health and wellbeing that accrue from a clean and harmonious environment;

Encouraged by the many examples of positive achievement in the abatement of pollution and the restoration of a healthy environment;

Mindful that the maintenance and improvement of health and wellbeing require a sustainable system of development;

Concerned at the ill-considered use of natural resources and man-made products in ways liable to damage the environment and endanger health;

Considering the international character of many environmental and health issues and the interdependence of nations and individuals in these matters;

Conscious of the fact that since developing countries are faced with major environmental problems, there is a need for global cooperation;

Responding to the specific characteristics of the European Region, and notably its large population, intensive industrialization and dense traffic;

Taking into account existing international instruments (such as agreements on protection of the ozone layer) and other initiatives relating to the environment and health,

The Ministers of the Environment and of Health of the Member States of the European Region of WHO, meeting together for the first time at Frankfurt-am-Main on 7 and 8 December 1989, have adopted the attached European Charter on Environment and Health and have accordingly agreed upon the principles and strategies laid down therein as a firm commitment to action. In view of its environmental mandate, the Commission of the European Communities was specially invited to participate and acting on behalf of the Community also adopted the Charter as a guideline for future action by the Community in areas which lie within Community competence.

ENTITLEMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. *Every individual* is entitled to:

   - an environment conducive to the highest attainable level of health and wellbeing;

   - information and consultation on the state of the environment, and on plans, decisions and activities likely to affect both the environment and health;

   - participation in the decision-making process.

2. *Every individual* has a responsibility to contribute to the protection of the environment, in the interests of his or her own health and the health of others.

3. *All sections* of society are responsible for protecting the environment and health as an intersectoral matter involving many disciplines; their respective duties should be clarified.

4. *Every public authority* and agency at different levels, in its daily work, should cooperate with other sectors in order to resolve problems of the environment and health.

5. *Every government and public authority* has the responsibility to protect the environment and to promote human health within the area under its jurisdiction, and to ensure that activities under its jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to human health in other states. Furthermore, each shares the common responsibility for safeguarding the global environment.

6. *Every public and private body* should assess its activities and carry them out in such a way as to protect peoples' health from harmful effects related to the physical, chemical, biological, microbiological and social environments. Each of these bodies should be accountable for its actions.

7. *The media* play a key role in promoting awareness and a positive attitude towards protection of health and the environment. They are entitled to adequate and accurate information and should be encouraged to communicate this information effectively to the public.

8. *Nongovernmental organizations* also play an important role in disseminating information to the public and promoting public awareness and response.

PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC POLICY

1. Good health and wellbeing require a clean and harmonious environment in which physical, psychological, social and aesthetic factors are all given their due importance. The environment should be regarded as a resource for improving living conditions and increasing wellbeing.

2. The preferred approach should be to promote the principle of 'prevention is better than cure'.

3. The health of every individual, especially those in vulnerable and high-risk groups, must be protected. Special attention should be paid to disadvantaged groups.

4. Action on problems of the environment and health should be based on the best available scientific information.

5. New policies, technologies and developments should be introduced with prudence and not before appropriate prior assessment of the potential environmental and health impact. There should be a responsibility to show that they are not harmful to health or the environment.

6. The health of individuals and communities should take clear precedence over considerations of economy and trade.

7. All aspects of socioeconomic development that relate to the impact of the environment on health and wellbeing must be considered.

8. The entire flow of chemicals, materials, products and waste should be managed in such a way as to achieve optimal use of natural resources and to cause minimal contamination.

9. Governments, public authorities and private bodies should aim at both preventing and reducing adverse effects caused by potentially hazardous agents and degraded urban and rural environments.

10. Environmental standards need to be continually reviewed to take account of new knowledge about the environment and health and of the effects of future economic development. Where applicable such standards should be harmonized.

11. The principle should be applied whereby every public and private body that causes or may cause damage to the environment is made financially responsible (the polluter pays principle).

12. Criteria and procedures to quantify, monitor and evaluate environmental and health damage should be further developed and implemented.

13. Trade and economic policies and development assistance programmes affecting the environment and health in foreign countries should comply with all the above principles. Export of environmental and health hazards should be avoided.

14. Development assistance should promote sustainable development and the safeguarding and improvement of human health as one of its integral components.

STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

1. The environment should be managed as a positive resource for human health and wellbeing.

2. In order to protect health, comprehensive strategies are required, including, inter alia, the following elements:

   (a) The responsibilities of public and private bodies for implementing appropriate measures should be clearly defined at all levels.

   (b) Control measures and other tools should be applied, as appropriate, to reduce risks to health and wellbeing from environmental factors. Fiscal, administrative and economic instruments and land-use planning have a vital role to play in promoting environmental conditions conducive to health and wellbeing and should be used for that purpose.

   (c) Better methods of prevention should be introduced as knowledge expands, including the use of the most appropriate and cost-effective technologies and, if necessary, the imposition of bans.

   (d) Low-impact technology and products and the recycling and reuse of wastes should be encouraged. Changes should be made, as necessary, in raw materials, production processes and waste management techniques.

   (e) High standards in management and operations should be followed to ensure that appropriate technologies and best practices are applied, that regulations and guidance are adhered to, and that accidents and human failures are avoided.

   (f) Appropriate regulations should be promulgated; they should be both enforceable and enforced.

   (g) Standards should be set on the basis of the best available scientific information. The cost and benefit of action or lack of action and feasibility may also have to be assessed but in all cases risks should be minimized.

   (h) Comprehensive strategies should be developed that take account of the risks to human health and the environment arising from chemicals. These strategies should include, inter alia, registration procedures for new chemicals and systematic examination of existing chemicals.

   (i) Contingency planning should be undertaken to deal with all types of serious accident, including those with transfrontier consequences.

(j) Information systems should be strengthened to support monitoring of the effectiveness of measures taken, trend analysis, priority-setting and decision-making.

(k) Environmental impact assessment should give greater emphasis to health aspects. Individuals and communities directly affected by the quality of a specific environment should be consulted and involved in managing that environment.

3. Medical and other relevant disciplines should be encouraged to pay greater attention to all aspects of environmental health. Environmental toxicology and environmental epidemiology are key tools of environmental health research and should be strengthened and further developed as special disciplines within the Region.

4. Interdisciplinary research programmes in environmental epidemiology with the aim of clarifying links between the environment and health should be encouraged and strengthened at regional, national and international levels.

5. The health sector should have responsibility for epidemiological surveillance through data collection, compilation, analysis and risk assessment of the health impact of environmental factors and for informing other sectors of society and the general public of trends and priorities.

6. National and international programmes of multidisciplinary training as well as the provision of health education and information for public and private bodies should be encouraged and strengthened.

PRIORITIES

1. Governments and other public authorities, without prejudice to the importance of problem areas specific to their respective countries, the European Community and other intergovernmental organizations, as appropriate, should pay particular attention to the following urgent issues of the environment and health at local, regional, national and international levels and will endeavour to take action on them:

global disturbances to the environment, such as the destruction of the ozone layer and climatic change;

urban development, planning and renewal to protect health and promote wellbeing;

safe and adequate drinking-water supplies on the basis of the WHO *Guidelines for drinking-water quality* together with hygienic waste disposal for all urban and rural communities.

water quality, in relation to surface, ground, coastal and recreational waters;

microbiological and chemical safety of food;

environment and health impact of

- various energy options;
- transport, especially road transport;
- agricultural practices, including the use of fertilizers and pesticides, and waste disposal;

air quality, on the basis of the *WHO Air quality guidelines for Europe*, especially in relation to oxides of sulfur and nitrogen, the photochemical oxidants ("summer smog") and volatile organic compounds;

indoor air quality (residential, recreational and occupational), including the effects of radon, passive smoking and chemicals;

persistent chemicals and those causing chronic effects;

hazardous wastes, including management, transport and disposal;

biotechnology, in particular genetically modified organisms;

contingency planning for and in response to accidents and disasters;

cleaner technologies as preventive measures.

2. In addressing all of these priorities, the importance of intersectoral environmental planning and community management to generate optimal health and wellbeing should be borne in mind.

3. Health promotion should be added to health protection so as to induce the adoption of healthy lifestyles in a clean and harmonious environment.

4. It should be recognized that some urgent problems require direct and immediate international cooperation and joint efforts.

THE WAY FORWARD

1. Member States of the European Region should:

   (a) take all necessary steps to reverse negative trends as soon as possible and to maintain and increase the health-related improvements already taking place. In particular, they should make every effort to implement WHO's regional strategy for health for all as it concerns the environment and health.

   (b) strengthen collaboration among themselves and, where appropriate, with the European Community, and with other intergovernmental bodies, on mutual and transfrontier environmental problems that pose a threat to health.

   (c) ensure that the Charter adopted at this meeting is made widely available in the languages of the European Region.

2. The WHO Regional Office for Europe is invited to:

   (a) explore ways of strengthening international mechanisms for assessing potential hazards to health associated with the environment and for developing guidance on their control.

   (b) make a critical study of existing indicators of the effects of the environment on health and, where necessary, develop others that are both specific and effective.

   (c) establish a European Advisory Committee on the Environment and Health in consultation with the governments of the countries of the Region.

   (d) in collaboration with the governments of the European countries, examine the desirability and feasibility of establishing a European Centre for the Environment and Health or other suitable institutional arrangements, with a view to strengthening collaboration on the health aspects of environmental protection with special emphasis on information systems, mechanisms for exchanging experience and coordinated studies. In such arrangements, cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and other organizations is desirable. Account should be taken of the environmental agency to be established within the European Communities.

3. Member States of the European Region and WHO should:

   promote the widest possible endorsement of the principles and attainment of the objectives of the Charter.

4. European Ministers of the Environment and of Health should:

meet again within five years to evaluate national and international progress and to endorse specific action plans drawn up by WHO and other international organizations for eliminating the most significant environmental threats to health as rapidly as possible.

SD/1528p

Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London SW1A 2NS
Telephone 01 210 3000
From the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health

Miss C Slocock
10 Downing Street
LONDON

15 January 1990

Dear Miss Slocock

WHO CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

You wrote to Helen Shirley-Quirk on 4 December 1989 conveying the Prime Minister's agreement that Roger Freeman should represent the UK at the conference on 'Environment and Health', organised by WHO's European Region and held at Frankfurt on 7-8 December.

The Prime Minister may wish to be aware of the outcome of the conference. A summary note is attached with the final text of the 'Charter on Environment and Health' endorsed by the conference.

Yours sincerely

Y S Baxter

YVONNE BAXTER
Private Secretary

Copy: Mr Dobson
Mr Lupton
Dr Matthew
Mr Dibb

E 1990s

Env Affairs: Acid
Rem
Pt 13

CONFIDENTIAL

ccfk

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-276 3000

Prime Minister

CJS

NBPM

My ref:

Your ref:

Caroline Slocock
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

15 January 1990

Dear Caroline

FILE WITH CAS

Thank you for your letters of 9 and 11 January. You will have seen my reply to Rosalind Cole of DTI responding to the points made in her letter of 8 January in the light of the Prime Minister's broad agreement to the release of information statutorily gathered by the pollution authorities.

My Secretary of State has also seen the correspondence from Jim Gallagher of the Scottish Office, Steven Williams of the Welsh Office and John Neilson of the Department of Energy. In the light of the concerns expressed in those letters he agrees that the relevant Departments will need to discuss in more detail the principle of more environmental information being made available by public bodies. He will not therefore announce a further consultation exercise during the second reading debate.

Yours

CEJ Bush

KATE BUSH
Private Secretary

ENV AFFAIRS : Acid Rain PT13

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

14 January 1990

I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from the Australian Prime Minister, covering a letter which he has in turn sent to a number of developing country heads of government, inviting them to participate in a technical assistance programme to provide training for assessing the affects of climate change on rural land productivity. I should be grateful for advice and a draft reply.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Myles Wickstead (Overseas Development Administration).

(CHARLES POWELL)

Richard Gozney, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CCPN

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

NBPM

Rosalind Cole
Private Secretary to
The Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley MP
Department of Trade and Industry
Victoria Street
LONDON
SW1

12 January 1990

Dear Ros

Thank you for your letter of 8 January in reply to Roger Bright's of 21 December which set out our proposals for making environmental information available to the public. You will have seen since the views of the Prime Minister set out in Caroline Slocock's letter of 9 January, agreeing to my Secretary of State's proposal to make an announcement at second reading.

Mr Patten strongly shares the view that we should minimise the burden on industry and the enforcing authorities. No new information would be required from industry under our proposals for making information available but only that information which is required by the pollution control authority to enable it to ascertain compliance with the conditions of an authorisation.

It will be for each enforcing authority to decide what information is requires. Nevertheless, I am aware of the concern that local enforcing authorities could approach their responsibilities in very different ways. We will therefore be issuing guidance on several aspects of the new control regime, including the setting of authorisations. In the last resort, if an applicant for an authorisation is unhappy about the terms of a condition prescribing the information to be supplied to HMIP (or a local authority) he may appeal to the Secretary of State.

A further attraction of the solution proposed in my letter of 21 December is that it will also minimise the burden on the enforcing authorities. The consultation paper issued in August suggested that the enforcing authorities should issue summary

monitoring data. Summarising that data would, however, be time consuming and in controversial cases could embroil the authorities in unwelcome controversy as to why particular information had been made available or excluded. Responses to the consultation paper made it clear that as summary data alone was provided the suspicion would remain, however unjustly, that information which may reflect badly upon the operator was being concealed. Controversies of this type could weaken public confidence in the pollution control authorities. The proposal that they should now act as a broker in making available to the public the information required of industry will avoid these difficulties, and reduce the burden.

You did suggest, however, that the release of information provided by industry would not aid general understanding of the facts and could be confusing unless substantial additional explanatory information were provided. But there is a view, best expressed by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, but shared by the more sophisticated environmental groups 'that to deny access to data on the grounds that the public is not competent to make correct use of them is neither a tenable nor an acceptable position." Furthermore, public access to raw data is already available in respect of water registers. (There would, of course, be considerable criticism if the proposals we are now bringing forward for integrated pollution control led to less information being available with respect to discharges to waters of the most polluting substances from the most potentially polluting industries.)

The proposal is intended to strike a balance between, on the one hand, making enough information available to satisfy the public (and indeed the most probable requirements of an EC directive on public access to environmental information) and on the other, imposing an additional burden on industry and the enforcing authorities. My Secretary of State is confident that the proposals achieve this balance and will command general confidence. In particular he thinks they will be sufficient to ensure that the provisions in the Environmental Protection Bill are well received, inside Parliament as well as outside.

Finally, I note that you welcome our intention to prepare guidelines on commercial confidentiality. DTI and industry will of course be closely consulted on the terms of that guidance.

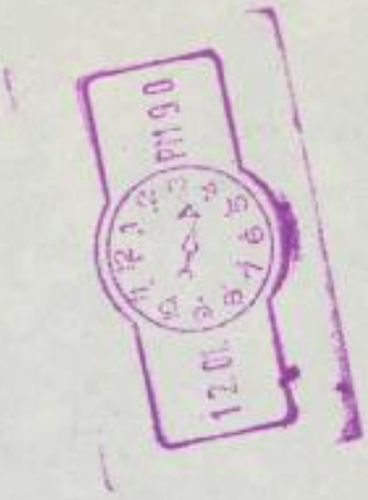
I am copying this letter to recipients of Roger's letter of 21 December.

Yours

CE J Bush

KATE BUSH
Private Secretary

ENV AFFAIRS : Acid Rain Pt 3



CONFIDENTIAL

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

11 January 1990

Dear Roger,

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Prime Minister has now seen the letter of 8 January from John Neilson in the Department of Energy, which we received only yesterday. The Secretary of State for Energy has asked that an announcement on the duty which might be placed on 'public authorities' to release environmental information should be delayed until the details are clearer. The Prime Minister has commented on this and said that it must be fully worked out before an announcement is made. She thinks that the proposal might give rise to many problems.

I am copying this letter to Private Secretaries to members of E(A), Bob Peirce (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), John Colston (Ministry of Defence) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,

CAROLINE SLOCOCK

Roger Bright, Esq.,
Department of Environment

CONFIDENTIAL

CCPU

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FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WALES

NBPM
ADS

CT/4013/89

10 January 1990

Dear Mr Bright

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

My Secretary of State has seen your letter of 21 ~~December~~ Mar to Paul Gray at No 10 about the conclusions reached on the responses to the consultation paper on public access to environmental information that will be held by enforcing authorities under Part 1 of the Environmental Protection Bill.

Mr Walker is generally content with the proposals relating to the consultation paper, but has expressed some reservation about the additional proposal (albeit in the van of a draft EC Directive) which would require public authorities to make available to the public, information obtained from surveys or monitoring relating to the state of the environment. He feels that this requirement could affect information provided by individuals, particularly farmers, who might not want it to be made public or to be identified.

Mr Walker notes that such a proposal would need a separate consultation exercise and, in the circumstances, he questions the wisdom of announcing this new proposal during Second Reading.

I am copying this to Paul Gray, the Private Secretaries of the members of E(A), to Bob Pierce (FCO), John Colston (Defence) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely

AE Coleman

pp S R WILLIAMS

R Bright Esq
Private Secretary to the
Secretary of State for the Environment
Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON SW1P 3EB

ENV AFFAIRS: Acid Rain PT13

KK

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

9 January 1990

Dear Roger,

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Prime Minister has seen your letter of 21 December to Paul Gray, and the further letters from Rosalind Cole of DTI and Jim Gallagher of the Scottish Office, both dated 8 January.

The Prime Minister notes the Department of Trade and Industry's concerns about the proposals now put forward for the release of information to the public by the pollution authorities; but broadly agrees to Mr. Patten's proposals. She is content that the public should have a right of access, not only to a summary of the information gathered by the authorities but also to the information itself where it is gathered under their statutory requirements. Commercially sensitive information will of course be safeguarded and she does not consider that the release of this information should in itself place any additional burden on industry. As far as the release of information provided voluntarily by industry to the authorities is concerned, the Prime Minister has commented that this information should be treated as confidential unless the giver expressly wishes it to be released. This should ensure that there is no deterrent for industry to give such information to the pollution authorities. The Prime Minister noted without comment the other proposals put forward in relation to commercially sensitive information.

You also mentioned that your Secretary of State would like to announce a consultation exercise on a proposal that public bodies which undertake service or monitoring aspects of the environment should make that information publicly available. This anticipates a requirement of an EC directive. The Prime Minister notes that the Scottish Office is concerned that this requirement might make it more difficult to gather information, particularly from farmers and landowners. As you will recall, a related proposal for periodic state of the environment reports was discussed last autumn. The Prime Minister and other colleagues expressed some concern then that a commitment to regular reports of collated information should be made, lest this

should become a rod to beat the Government's back. Your letter does not go into detail about the nature of the requirement now proposed but the Prime Minister still has this concern and shares the Scottish Offices wish to exercise caution before making firm commitments. However, she is content for your Secretary of State to go ahead with announcing a consultation exercise.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of E(A), to Bob Peirce (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), John Colston (Ministry of Defence), and to Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,

Caroline

(CAROLINE SLOCOCK)

Roger Bright, Esq.,
Department of the Environment

CONFIDENTIAL

FILE KK

bc P.L.

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

9 January 1990

Dear David,

MISC 141: POLICY ON THE ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS FOR ELECTRICITY PRIVATISATION

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 8 January and noted its contents without comment.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of MISC 141 and to Sonia Phippard and Richard Wilson (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,

(CAROLINE SLOCOCK)

David Murphy, Esq.,
Department of Energy.

THE RT HON JOHN WAKEHAM MP

Department of Energy
1 Palace Street
London SW1E 5HE
01 238 3290

The Rt Hon Chris Patten MP
Secretary of State for the
Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 3EB

9 January 1990

Dear Chris,

CONTROL MEASURES FOR ENERGY RELATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

I was pleased to read in your letter of 16th December of your full support for our submission of the "National Study" report to the IPCC. Copies of it have been placed in the Library of the House and I am making arrangements for it to be published by HMSO. It will probably be available from them in mid-January.

There is likely to be considerable interest in the report when it is published so it would be sensible to agree a briefing line now. I attach a revised text of your note, emphasising the point that the main feature of the study is the assessment of technical options and their costs, and not of the scenarios or statements about UK policy. I need to add a point of caution here; we should avoid creating the impression we are forecasting the future - the cases are set against background "scenarios" for which we neither endorse the fuel price assumptions nor make any case for preference of them against other similar scenarios.

Clearly, publication will provide a further opportunity to stress our commitment to coordinate international action to tackle global warming. But it is important in all our public statements at this stage that we do not preempt the policy discussions which we are having in MISC 141. I would be grateful therefore if your Press Office and officials would keep in close touch with ours and not go beyond the revised text.

I am copying this to the Prime Minister, Douglas Hurd, John Major, Peter Walker, Nicholas Ridley, Malcolm Rifkind, Cecil Parkinson, John Gummer and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever

John

JOHN WAKEHAM

LINE TO TAKE ON UK IPCC STUDY ON TECHNICAL OPTIONS TO CONTROL FUTURE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

1. The report "An Evaluation of Energy Related Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Measures to Ameliorate Them" is a UK contribution for the Energy and Industry subgroup of the Response Strategies Working Group of IPCC. It was given to the IPCC in late November 1989. Copies were placed in the Library of the House. The report will be published by HMSO in mid-January.

2. The aim of the UK study is to illustrate the practical technical options, and their possible costs, which may be available to curtail emissions of the "greenhouse" gases from the many energy related activities of UK society. Similar studies are being submitted to the IPCC by many other countries. These all take as their baseline the continuation of existing national policies.

3. Of necessity, the study has to consider the size of future emissions of the greenhouse gases and the shape of the then energy system, as background against which the technical measures can be analysed. Such scenarios of future emissions, being very dependent on the input assumptions, are only intended to provide a framework for assessing the options. They are not predictions of the future, nor statements about UK government policy on Greenhouse Gas emissions.

4. Future emissions of Greenhouse gases will be dependent on many factors including, fuel choice, economic and technological development, social and demographic change and government policy. The purpose of the IPCC Reports is to provide a basis for discussion of policy options open to the international community. The UK government is firmly committed to supporting international efforts to tackle the threat of the Greenhouse Effect. It has made clear on a number of occasions that it will review its policies in the light of the scientific and other advice from the IPCC.

cc PM

THE RT HON JOHN WAKEHAM MP

Department of Energy
1 Palace Street
London SW1E 5HE
01 238 3149

Prime Minister

The Secretary of State for Energy also sees problems with the proposal for a duty on "public authorities" to release information they gather on the environment. He is proposing that an announcement to consult on this should be delayed.

Roger Bright Esq
Private Secretary to
The Rt Hon Chris Patten MP
Secretary of State for the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 3EB

8 January 1990

It must be fully worked out before any announcement is made - indeed I think the proposal may give rise to many problems not

Dear Roger,

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Thank you for your letter of 21 December. My Secretary of State has asked me to pass on a number of caveats about your proposals.

As regards control over the atmospheric emissions by the electricity industry, officials here have drawn the attention of yours to the need to take account of any directions the Secretary of State may make under Section 58 of the Electricity Act 1989 to prevent licensees from obtaining any unfair advantage from information which comes into their possession. It is therefore important that we are consulted on the preparation of the intended guidelines on the considerations to be taken into account in assessing commercial confidentiality.

Another point to bear in mind is that my Secretary of State wrote to yours on 21 December about the proposed method of limiting SO_2 and NO_x emissions. The outcome may have a bearing on the type of information to which there will be public access.

We also see potential problems with your third proposal, about the making available of information by "public authorities": this would seem to include the collection by my Department of information about oil spills, oil-contaminated drill cuttings, oil in produced water, and chemicals used offshore. Some of this information is provided under statutory powers (with the oil companies effectively reporting on themselves), some is voluntary, and some may present problems of commercial confidentiality. It is not clear whether the same provisions for disclosure, as set down for the pollution control

authorities - ie preservation of commercial confidentiality, disclosure of voluntary information at the option of the provider - apply here also. Nor is it clear whether we will need to follow the line on detailed disclosure, or whether the summarised information, which we already produce for our "Brown Book" and reports to the Paris Commission, will suffice.

Clearly our Departments will need to discuss this matter in more detail to see how serious a problem it might be. My Secretary of State suggests therefore that the announcement of the proposal be delayed to allow this assessment to take place.

I should perhaps add that the making available of this information could carry some resource implications for the Department: it might be "reasonable", but it may not be "unburdensome".

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

Yours
John

JOHN NEILSON
Principal Private Secretary

Env Affairs
Acid Rain Pt 13

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

MISC 141: POLICY ON THE ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS FOR ELECTRICITY PRIVATISATION

I welcome the work programme which has now been drawn up and circulated as the follow up to the first meeting of MISC 141 on 7 December. In taking the work forward, in drawing up the White Paper, and in participating in international conferences it is important however that nothing is done unwittingly that would prejudice the privatisation of the electricity industry. To this end, as agreed, I attach a guidance note which sets out the prospectus implications of work on the threat of climatic change from the greenhouse effect.

The key points in the note are:

(i) There needs to be great care in making public statements or taking action on matters which could have a material impact on the future profitability of the electricity industry. It is essential to avoid making any commitments or implying that commitments will be made as we go forward to the first of the flotations this autumn without the benefit of an assessment of the impact on the electricity industry and its privatisation having first been made.

(ii) Very serious problems can arise, if the Government were to make announcements, enter into commitments or take major initiatives during the offer for sale periods unless these had been fully foreshadowed in the prospectuses.

It is helpful that we are planning to publish a White Paper in the early autumn. This will provide the opportunity for a clear statement of Government policy. To the extent that such policy may have an impact on the electricity industry, potential investors will have had a full opportunity to consider the implications.

We have to be aware, however, that if we wish to take significant action in the period after the publication of the White Paper and before the completion of the privatisation, and this action were of a nature to have a material impact on the electricity

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industry's profitability in the time-frame that investors will be looking at, then we could put the privatisation at risk. We will of course have to consider each case on its merits at the time particularly in the light of developments in international fora which will constrain our flexibility on timing. I would be grateful, however, if colleagues were to bear this point in mind.

I am copying this minute and the guidance note to the members of MISC 141 and to Sir Robin Butler.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY

8 January 1990

ENVIRONMENT WHITE PAPER: PROSPECTUS IMPLICATIONS FOR ELECTRICITY PRIVATISATION

GUIDANCE NOTE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

1. In offering the electricity industry for sale, the Government will be under a duty to disclose in the prospectuses all material factors. This duty should be borne in mind when the follow up work to MISC 141 is undertaken; the purpose of this guidance note is to set out what the potential problems may be. The electricity supply companies are due to be offered for sale in Autumn 1990, the generating companies and the Scottish industry in the first 6 months of 1991.

2. In practice, the prospectus disclosure duty means that each of the prospectuses would have to record any decision by Government on environmental matters that could be material to the company or companies (and particularly its or their profitability) the subject of the prospectus. It would also have to record any intention within Government to take action on environmental matters which could materially affect the company or companies, even if a formal decision had not actually been taken or announced. Examples of this would include general statements of policy or specific commitments aimed at reducing the levels of CO_2 emissions. In addition, if the Government were still reviewing its policy in areas which could have a material impact on the electricity industry, this would itself have to be recorded in the prospectuses, though exactly what needed to be disclosed would have to be considered on a case by case basis.

3. If reviews of policy have been completed and decisions announced, for example in the White Paper, in good time before the flotations, then the outcome can be reflected in the prospectuses. Problems can arise, however, if in the immediate run up to the flotations Government were to make commitments or take major initiatives that could have a material effect on the electricity industry. In such circumstances there is a risk that, if market analysts do not have adequate time to consider

the implications, the offer for sale may be disproportionately affected. Very serious problems can arise if, in the period between effectively finalising the prospectuses and completion of each sale, the Government were to make commitments or take major initiatives which had not been properly foreshadowed in the prospectuses. Were this to happen, and were the effect on the electricity industry material, the offer for sale might well need to be cancelled. It would not be sufficient simply to delay the announcement of any decision until after the flotations.

4. There is a one further risk that needs to be taken into account. Unguarded public statements may lead to an expectation of the Government taking action in areas which might have a material impact on the electricity industry. This could in itself lead to damaging uncertainty in the minds of potential investors, undermining the prospects for success of the flotations. The Government could then find itself under pressure to take a premature decision simply to dispel the uncertainty.

5. In view of these risks to the flotations it is important that the Department of Energy is fully consulted in all areas of the review which could have an impact on the electricity industry. (The contact point for this will be Mr Gordon Thynne, Electricity Division A 238-3279). It has to be recognised that, since many initiatives are likely to arise in international fora, the scope for control over timing may in some cases be limited. The UK stance at international conferences very close to the flotation dates will need to be handled exceptionally carefully, and further consideration will need to be given to this in due course. Nonetheless, it remains essential that the Government avoid making any commitments, or implying that commitments will be made, without the benefit of an assessment of the impact on the electricity industry and its privatisation having first been made.

Department of Energy

B cc/M

dti

the department for Enterprise

The Rt. Hon. Nicholas Ridley MP
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

Roger Bright Esq
Private Secretary to the
Secretary of State for the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 3EB

Department of
Trade and Industry

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Direct line 01 215 5623
Our ref JW5AFX
Your ref
Date 8 January 1990

Dear Roger,

PUBLIC ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

File with CAS

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of ~~21~~ December to Paul Gray.

As you note in your letter, in responding to the August consultation paper, industry argued against giving the public access to raw monitoring data. This was on the basis that the release of such information would not aid general understanding of the facts and could be confusing unless substantial additional explanatory information were provided at disproportionate costs to the firms involved and the control authorities.

Your Secretary of State's latest proposal falls short of access to all raw data (although we are not entirely clear precisely how far short) but it seems to us to be subject to the same objections. Indeed, there seems to be a risk that it could lead to the worst of all worlds by imposing unwelcome burdens on industry and the control authorities without satisfying the small minority of the public who would want more than summary information. We cannot therefore agree to what is proposed.

However, we welcome the proposal that DOE should prepare guidelines setting out the considerations the enforcing authorities should take into account in deciding on commercial confidentiality. It will be important that there is a clear and consistent approach to commercially sensitive information. Your letter does not specify the timetable for preparing the guidelines but we assume that it will allow adequate time for DTI and industry to be fully consulted on the terms.

Recycled Paper

dti

the department for Enterprise

Assuming satisfactory arrangements on commercial confidentiality, the proposal on access to state of the environment reports prepared by bodies such as DOE and the NRA seems right in principle. We can comment in more detail in response to the consultation exercise.

I am copying this letter to recipients of yours.

Yours

Rosalind Cole

ROSALIND COLE
Private Secretary

Recycled Paper

ENV AFFAIRS : Acc law AT13

cc PM
C

SCOTTISH OFFICE
WHITEHALL. LONDON SW1A 2AU

Roger Bright Esq
Private Secretary to the
Secretary of State for the Environment
Department of the Environment
2 Marsham St
LONDON
SW1P 3EB

8 January 1990

Dear Roger.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Thank you for copying to me your letter of ~~21~~ December to Paul Gray. My Secretary of State undertook a separate consultation exercise for Scotland, which met with the same generally favourable response. He is therefore content with the proposals set out in your letter for the Environmental Protection Bill's provisions in this regard.

However, he has more difficulty with the further suggestion arising from the draft EC Directive on public access to environmental information. He fully understands your Secretary of State's desire to have a maximum of information about the environment readily available. In practice, where this information depends upon the co-operation of farmers and landowners, such a blanket provision could create difficulties and even lead to less data being centrally available. We have in mind for instance the circumstances which the enforcing authority can encounter when a survey requires soil samples to be taken; this is usually permitted on condition that their exact source is not revealed. Without such a safeguard co-operation could be withheld in the future, if a provision of the kind now contemplated were to come into effect. It is also possible that we could be open to claims for compensation where a business has been adversely affected by identification of a sample site.

My Secretary of State therefore believes that we should approach this matter with some caution, especially as the terms of the EC Directive have still to be finalised. He is happy for the further consultation exercise to be announced at Second Reading so long as this is couched in fairly

general terms. The detail of the proposals will need careful consideration before the consultation paper is issued, particularly in respect of measurements of radioactivity.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of the members of E(A), to Bob Pearce (FCO), John Colston (MOD) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,
Ken Wright

pp. J D GALLAGHER
Private Secretary

ENV AFFAIRS : Acid Rain P 173

PRIME MINISTER ①

PUBLIC ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

DOE at Flag A sets out Mr Patten's proposals for responding to the recent consultation exercise on public access to information held by the pollution control authorities.

He proposes that:

(i) the public should be given right of access to all information gathered by the authorities under their statutory requirements; and to information given voluntarily only with the consent of industry. Consultation showed that industry wants a summary only to be given out but the public feel strongly that they should have access to more information;

Info given voluntarily should not be revealed unless the giver expressly wishes

(ii) an additional measure to ensure greater consistency in the grounds on which information is classified as commercially sensitive (and therefore is excluded from (i)); and a mechanism for reporting on the performance of industries where confidential information cannot be given out;

(iii) a proposal to consult about the introduction of a requirement (anticipating an EC Directive) for public bodies, including DOE, to give out information they hold about the state of the environment.

DTI at Flag B opposes what is proposed at (i) on the grounds that it is burdensome on industry. This argument seems a little strained given that all the information given out would have already have been supplied by industry to the enforcing authorities. DTI also feels that Mr Patten's compromise solution will not satisfy the public since it gives industry the right to veto public access to information given voluntarily to the pollution authorities (it is not clear how much of the information

See note above

is likely to fall into this category). But such a right of veto seems justified - without it there might be a deterrent for industry to cooperate fully with the authorities;

The Scottish Office at Flag C expresses doubts about the new duty for Government bodies to give out information about the environment. It argues that it might make it more difficult to gather information, particularly farmers and landowners. But it is content for a consultation paper to be issued.

You may recall that the proposal at (iii) was put forward in a slightly different form by Mr Patten just before the Party Conference. He had wanted to announce a commitment to give periodic state of the environment reports. You and other colleagues, notably Mr Baker, were concerned about giving a commitment to regular reports of collated information, lest this should become a rod to beat the Government's back. ✓

The DOE letter is a little unclear about the nature of the duty proposed, but it certainly seems a less formal one than that put forward in the autumn. There is apparently no duty to publish an annual report, rather a somewhat woolly requirement to publish all information gathered. I think the Scottish Office are right to express some caution about this. So do I.

Content to:

- Agree to what Mr Patten proposes on the release of information by the enforcing authorities to the public, given the safeguarding of commercially sensitive information and the right of veto for industry over information given voluntarily?

the other way round - info. given voluntarily is confidential except at the express wish of the person concerned

- share the Scottish Office's caution over the duty for Government to release environmental information but agree to an announcement of the consultion exercise next week?

CAS

Yes mt

Caroline Slocock
8 January 1990

CCPU

NBPM

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

The Rt Hon Malcolm Rifkind QC MP
Secretary of State
Scottish Office
Dover House
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2AU

22 December 1989

Dear Malcolm,

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BILL

Dup P+12.

Thank you for your letter of 30 November concerning the re-instatement of Section 2(7) powers of the Control of Pollution Act in the provisions for waste disposal and recycling plans of the Bill.

I would like time to think further about the implications of such powers for the resources of the Department. I am of course concerned about consistency and in particular about a requirement to keep a check on the progress of recycling plans, even in a limited way, for 400 authorities. I have asked my officials to discuss the matter further with yours. This will of course mean that the provision cannot appear in the first print of the Bill as you would prefer, but there would be an opportunity to introduce whatever measures may be thought to be necessary in Committee. My officials will of course bear in mind Geoffrey Howe's letter to you of 8 December.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, other members of H Committee and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever,

CHRIS PATTEN

Environmental Affairs:

Pt 13 Acid Rain.

CONFIDENTIAL

file LPo
+ cc. Chief Sec. HMT
CCPo.

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

22 December 1989

Dear Roger,

MISC 141: POLICY ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The Prime Minister has approved the enclosed programme of work for MISC 141 which the Cabinet Office has prepared in consultation with Departments. I understand that work is now in hand on the papers shown in the programme and that an exercise is also being carried out to bring together material about the Government's achievements so far on environmental policy and the resources being devoted to it.

The Prime Minister has noted that the Secretary of State for Energy will be circulating guidance in connection with electricity privatisation.

I am copying this letter and the enclosure to the Private Secretaries to other members of MISC 141 and to Sonia Phippard in the Cabinet Office.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Slocock

CAROLINE SLOCOCK

Roger Bright, Esq.
Department of the Environment.

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MISC 141: PROGRAMME OF WORK

MEETING AT THE END OF JANUARY
Global Issues

1. Paper by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office assessing the timetable for taking decisions on emissions of greenhouse gases internationally, the UK's stance to date and the likely stance of other major countries.

2. Paper by the Department of the Environment providing global projections of greenhouse gas emissions for the years 2000 and 2020, what reductions in those projections are likely to be required to protect the global climate, and what levels that might imply for the UK.

3. Paper(s) by the Department of Energy on the options for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases from energy use (excluding transport but including industrial and domestic uses), including:

   i. energy efficiency;

   ii. the future contribution of nuclear energy;

   iii. limiting power station emissions.

4. Paper by the Department of Transport on the options for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases in the transport sector.

5. Paper by the Department of the Environment in consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Energy on the options for limiting emissions of methane.

Papers 3, 4 and 5 will cover projections of UK emissions for the years 2000 and 2020 and ways of securing reductions. They will in particular explore the implications of (a) achieving by the year 2000 emissions 20% below the current projection for that year, or (b) holding emissions steady from 2000 onwards at the current projection for that year, or (c) achieving reductions after 2000 so that by 2020 emissions are 20% below the current projection for 2000.

MEETINGS IN THE SECOND HALF OF FEBRUARY/EARLY MARCH

Global Issues

6. Further papers on greenhouse gases commissioned at the previous meeting.

7. Paper by HM Treasury on the relative merits of different instruments for securing reductions in greenhouse gases, including regulation and market-based approaches, and on the associated economic costs.

Regional issues

8. Paper by the Department of Energy on the most effective ways of reducing acid rain emissions. This will include the implications of meeting our existing international obligations, and an assessment of the likely outcome of the reviews which are due between now and the mid-1990s.

National issues

9. Paper by the Department of the Environment in consultation with the Department of Transport on land use and housing.

10. Paper by Department of the Environment in consultation

with the Ministry of Agriculture on the aquatic environment, including rivers, coastal waters and the North Sea.

11. Paper by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in consultation with the Department of the Environment on countryside and agriculture.

12. Paper by the Secretary of State for Scotland on the contribution of forestry.

13. Paper by the Department of Trade and Industry in consultation with the Department of the Environment on waste minimisation and recycling.

14. Paper by the Department of the Environment on waste control and disposal, including toxic and radioactive wastes.

15. Paper by the Department of Trade and Industry on pollution control technology and opportunities for the UK industry in the international market.

16. Paper by the Overseas Development Administration in consultation with the Department of Trade and Industry on aid for environmental measures in developing countries and on technology transfer.

17. Paper by the Chief Scientific Adviser on the UK contribution to environmental research and the arrangements for international co-ordination of research.

MEETING AT THE END OF MARCH

18. Decisions on the approach to climate change to be adopted in the White Paper and forthcoming international discussions, including an agreed negotiating position on

the contribution which the UK would be prepared to make as part of an international effort, the overall levels of greenhouse gas emissions to be achieved globally and how these should be apportioned between countries.

19. Paper by the Department of the Environment reviewing the conclusions so far reached on issues other than climate change, and the issues which remain to be resolved.

20. Outline of Draft White Paper.

Cabinet Office
18 December 1989

PRIME MINISTER 2

20 December 1989

CARS AND EMISSIONS

You may like to look at the attached note from David Fiske in the Department of the Environment on the latest position on catalysts.

The key point is that improvements in engine efficiency - which are technically possible - mean that cars with 3-way catalysts would not be markedly worse, in terms of the greenhouse effect, than a lean burn fleet. They would of course be better than the present fleet (which is neither lean burn nor widely fitted with 3-way catalysts).

This revised scientific assessment of catalysts v lean burn has led Chris Patten to suggest to John Major that we should introduce fiscal incentives to encourage people to buy cars with catalysts. The incentive would probably take the form of a differential car tax, with a higher rate payable on cars without catalysts. This would be revenue neutral.

Chris Patten's main aim is to make faster progress towards the 1994 target for No x reductions (an international commitment).

CAROLYN SINCLAIR

I don't see why we should need [illegible] merely because something should be done.

CARS, CATALYSTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE; STATUS SUMMARY FOLLOWING THE JUNE 1989 LUXEMBOURG AGREEMENT

1. As a result of the agreement reached at the Environmental Council in June this year, all new cars will need to be equipped with fully-controlled 3-way catalyst systems from the end of December 1992. The new regulations will mean very large reductions in emissions of the conventional pollutants,, nitrogen oxides (NOx), hydrocarbons (HC) and carbon monoxide (CO). They do not, however, address the emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2) and nitrous oxide (N_2O). This note summarises current information on the overall impact of the new regulations in terms of their greenhouse gas potential.

3. **Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)**

The nitrogen oxides are indirectly related to greenhouse gas concentrations because they tend to increase the background global ozone (O_3) concentration in the troposphere, and O_3 is a greenhouse gas. Reducing car emissions of NOx will have a beneficial effect in reducing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere.

4. **Carbon Monoxide (CO)**

Carbon Monoxide is also indirectly related to greenhouse gas concentrations because it interferes with a natural destruction route for methane (CH_4), which is a greenhouse gas about 10 times as effective as carbon dioxide (CO_2). The breakdown of CH_4 in the atmosphere depends on attack by hydroxyl radicals (OH), which themselves are destroyed by CO molecules. Release of CO into the atmosphere therefore effectively increases the lifetime of CH_4 and hence the concentration. Reducing CO emissions therefore has an indirect beneficial effect in reducing greenhouse gas concentrations.

5. Hydrocarbons (HC)

Hydrocarbons are, with NOx, responsible for low level ozone "smog episodes" during hot, sunny summer weather, but the impact on greenhouse gas concentrations is negligible.

6. Carbon Dioxide (CO_2)

CO_2 is the single most important greenhouse gas. In the UK, petrol engined motor vehicles are responsible for about 13% of all man-made emissions. Fitting 3-way catalysts to cars is likely to lead to some improvement in fuel consumption and therefore CO_2 emissions, compared to present day cars because the fuel supply and ignition systems have to be of much better quality and performance in order to ensure conditions for the catalyst to work. Catalysts do, however, preclude tuning engines for the highest efficiency, which is always a higher ratio of air to fuel then that at which 3-way catalysts work. The largest potential gain in fuel efficiency of engines comes, however, from true "lean-burn" designs, which might be at least 10% more economical than cars tuned for 3-way catalyst operations. 3-way catalysts, therefore, mean more CO_2 than there might have been, had lean-burn engines been permitted under less stringent emission regulations, but probably less CO_2 per car than the current fleet.

7. Nitrous Oxides (N_2O)

Nitrous oxide is a minor greenhouse gas, currently responsible for about 5% of the man-made greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. 3-way catalysts cars do seem to emit more N_2O than unregulated cars, although data are still scarce. On the basis of the few data available, conversion of all the world's petrol cars to 3-way catalyst operation might increase man-made N_2O emissions by up to about 8%.

8. **Summary**

In terms of the impact on the greenhouse effect, fitting 3-way catalysts to UK cars will have both benefits and disadvantages. These can be tabulated as follows.

Emission	Greenhouse Gas Affected	Greenhouse Effect	
		Increase	Decrease
CO_2	CO_2	X	
NOx	O_3		X
CO	CH_4		X
N_2O	N_2O	X	

Through our Harwell Research Programme, we have been able to make a preliminary evaluation of the CO_2 and NOx effects. This indicates that the CO_2 increase of a 3-way catalyst compared with a lean-burn engined fleet could be about equivalent to the O_3 increase due to the extra NOx emission of the lean-burn engine. The opposite effects of CO and N_2O within a 3-way catalyst fleet, while not yet fully quantified, also point to an overall neutral impact.

9. Overall, the 3-way catalyst car does not emerge with obvious severe disadvantages for the greenhouse gases in comparison with a lean-burn fleet, and many will have overall advantages compared with present day vehicles.

BF 2/1
CAB
22/12

A copy

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

Paul Gray Esq
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

21 December 1989

Dear Paul

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

At the end of August my Secretary of State, with the agreement of E(A) published a consultation paper on public access to the information which will be held by the pollution control authorities under the new systems of integrated pollution control and local authority air pollution control which will be introduced by the Environmental Protection Bill.

The paper proposed that the enforcing authorities would maintain public registers setting out information about the operation of the new controls. That proposal was welcomed, together with the safeguards proposed for protecting information that is sensitive on the grounds of either national security or commercial confidentiality.

The paper proposed that the registers should include a summary of the monitoring information held by the enforcing authorities, but left open the question of whether a right of access should also be given to the information from which the summary was drawn. This aspect of the paper received most comment. In particular it was felt most strongly that restricting information to a summary would fail to command public confidence in the system of information we are establishing in the Bill. My Secretary of State has concluded, notwithstanding the preference expressed by the majority of industry for summary information only to be provided, that access should be given to all the monitoring data received by the enforcing authorities as part of their statutory requirements. He agrees with the view expressed by industry, however, that information supplied voluntarily to the enforcing authorities should only be made available to the public with the express consent of the industrialist.

The other main recommendations of the consultation paper stand, save for two main additional proposals. First, where detailed information is omitted on the grounds of commercial or national security sensitivity, my Secretary of State proposes that the enforcing authority should enter from time to time on the register a brief declaration of the operator's record of compliance with the terms of an authorisation. No declaration would, of course, be included in those exceptional circumstances where it could compromise national security. Second, he proposes that guidelines should be prepared by the Department of the Environment setting out what kinds of consideration should be taken into account by the enforcing authorities in deciding on commercial confidentiality. This was a matter of particular concern to industry, which wished to see a consistent application of the safeguard across the local enforcing authorities in particular.

In the light of the draft EC directive on public access to environmental information, my Secretary of State has one further proposal to make. That directive would require public authorities to make available to the public information relating to the state of the environment which they may hold. My Secretary of State considers that it would be reasonable for public bodies, such as DOE, NRA and local authorities which undertake surveys of or monitor an aspect of the environment, to make that information available. Properly framed, a requirement on public authorities with environmental responsibilities to make available to the public information on the state of the environment which they have gathered themselves, or obtained from others through the exercise of their statutory powers, would be both reasonable and unburdensome.

This proposal would require a separate (but minor) consultation exercise which, subject to the views of colleagues my Secretary of State would like to announce during Second Reading of the Bill, currently planned for the week beginning 15 January. He would therefore be grateful for comments on these proposals by close of play on 8 January.

I am copying this letter to the private secretaries of the members of E(A), to Bob Pierce (FCO), John Colston (Defence) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

R BRIGHT
Private Secretary

ENV AFFAIRS: Acid Rain Pt 3

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

MISC 141

You saw the attached papers from the Treasury in last night's box and raised two points. I am checking on the follow up action you would like me to take.

You were concerned by the reference to taxes. The wording in relation to market-based measures could be better put; but the point of the briefing is to explain why the use of market-based measures is unlikely to be appropriate in the shorter-term or unilaterally, and it goes on to do so. The reference to the introduction of VAT for fuel and power and businesses is defensive only and is a statement of fact.

Would you like me to ask the Treasury to modify the briefing to reflect your concerns? Yes pls

Or are you happy for me to mention that you endorse the attached Treasury briefing when I circulate the Misc 141 work programme?

On a related matter, you may wish to note that Mr Wakeham intends to circulate a note on the disclosure obligation involved in electricity privatisation. Mr Wakeham is concerned that Misc 141 should not unknowingly endorse or explore options which would have to be revealed and create difficulties in the flotation.

CAS

Caroline Slocock
20 December 1989

THE INDEPENDENT 20.12.89

Prime Minister
AT 20/12

Bogged down in an environmental disaster

Ian Prestt advises Chris Patten to drop the break-up of the Nature Conservancy Council

LOOKING out from his new offices at the Department of the Environment, Chris Patten must realise that his green honeymoon is over. Politicians ignore backyard issues at their peril and the Environment Secretary now finds himself embroiled in an unnecessary domestic conflict over the future of the Nature Conservancy Council.

The Government's Environmental Protection Bill, which comes before the House of Commons today, contains a plan to split the NCC and merge it with the Countryside Commission to form new conservation agencies in Scotland and Wales. It is an issue which has produced more controversy and publicity than the Government can have wished. The proposals have united Britain's conservation bodies in an unprecedented fashion and caused an outcry which has shaken Whitehall.

The decision has angered environmental groups, who see it as a deliberate attempt to weaken the case for conservation. They believe it will undermine the scientific base of a body which has always judged conservation issues from a British perspective.

The political impetus behind the proposals comes from Scotland, where conflict between development and nature conservation has often caused the NCC to take a strong stand against the wishes of vested development interests.

"Divide and rule" is a well-established technique and in replacing the NCC in Scotland with a Scottish Natural Heritage Agency, the Scottish Office thinks it has found a way of bringing the errant child to heel.

Closer examination of the Scottish situation reveals the root cause of the conflict to be the Government's blinkered approach to land-use policies — typified by the decision to allow afforestation of the Flow Country of Sutherland and Caithness, which forced the NCC on to the defensive, seeking to conserve a vast peatland against land-hungry foresters keen to take advantage of tax relief and grants.

Only by standing firm and offering advice from a national perspective was the NCC able to secure a modest compromise. In 1988, after more than 20 per cent of the area had been afforested, the Secretary of State for Scotland, Malcolm Rifkind, ruled that half of the remaining area should be safeguarded. The NCC now pays the political price for proving less pliable than the Scottish Office and its development agencies intended.

If ministers had consulted conservation bodies over the future of Britain's countryside agencies it might have been possible to find a way forward. After all, the NCC is only a vehicle for delivering conservation practice and advice. Nevertheless, a convincing alternative would need to be found to justify the disruption the upheaval of reorganisation would entail.

Instead the Government chose a course which precluded all discussion. In the four months since the split was announced the situation has not been made any clearer by ministers' fumbling attempts to justify their decision.

A consultation paper was issued by the Scottish Office on the formation of the Scottish Natural Heritage Agency. It was so bland as to be almost useless. On 28 November Mr Rifkind announced that the responses revealed that most bodies were in favour of it.

Scrutiny of the 179 responses, however, shows that few favour the proposal as it stands. A large proportion of respondents realise that the merger cannot be divorced from the decision to fragment the NCC. They have strong reservations about the structure of such an agency and its benefit to conservation.

Mr Rifkind claims that the Scottish arm of NCC is itself in favour of autonomy, but this is a minority view expressed by a few of the Government's own appointees to the Scottish Advisory Committee for NCC. It is interesting to note that despite being promised job security the majority of NCC staff in Scotland are against the split.

In a hasty attempt to defuse the situation, the Government announced on 23 November a proposal to create a co-ordinating committee which it hopes will provide the British overview which its original proposal lacked.

This committee — lacking staff, resources and an independent chairman — is patently inadequate. It is hard to see how it can co-ordinate action effectively when the bodies for Scotland and Wales will have a single remit covering work now carried out by the NCC and Countryside Commissions, while England remains in the NCC's remit.

The committee is unlikely to have the statutory power to require the separate agencies to follow its advice — in other words it can be ignored.

The Government committed itself to a leading role in promoting the environment as a political issue when Margaret Thatcher addressed the Royal Society in November 1988. Now more than ever its green credentials are under scrutiny.

It is ironic that the influence the Government has commanded in Europe over environmental issues will be seriously weakened by the NCC's fragmentation. With three separate government conservation agencies there will be no body which can advise impartially about the impact on nature conservation of national or EC land-use policies and underpin that advice with effective science.

For 40 years the criteria for identifying the most important areas for nature conservation have emerged from a scientific research programme covering Britain as a whole. A balanced network of sites has been established nationwide.

The division of Britain's conservation base will make it more difficult for individual countries to make reasoned assessments in a British context.

Although saddled by his predecessor with the decision to fragment the NCC, Mr Patten promised at the Conservative Party conference to produce a White Paper on environment policy. That would surely be the right way to open discussion and full consultation on the future of the countryside and the agencies needed to protect it.

In view of the widespread public criticism, Mr Patten should delay this ill-considered proposal inherited from his predecessor, Nicholas Ridley, and draw up revised plans which meet the needs of conservation into the 1990s and beyond.

But let Mr Patten be bolder still. Now is the time to re-examine the role of farming, forestry, rural planning and development as a whole. Only by such a fundamental review can the correct machinery for managing and advising on conservation at all levels be found.

If conservation is to mean anything, a means of bridging the gap between it and development is required. Changing the NCC, which has done an effective job, will not achieve this.

The author is director general of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

CONFIDENTIAL

GR
Please scan draft
ABS

From: R T J Wilson
19 December 1989

MISS SLOCOCK

P 03598

MISC 141: POLICY ON THE ENVIRONMENT

At its meeting on 7 December MISC 141 asked the Cabinet Office to prepare a programme of work on environment policy as a basis for future meetings.

2. I attach this programme together with a covering letter which, if the Prime Minister is content, you may wish to use to send it to the private offices of members of MISC 141.

3. The programme is broadly the same as the one which I included in the Prime Minister's brief for MISC 141. Following discussion with Departments it now includes a fuller explanation of the options to be considered on greenhouse gases and it also commissions additional papers on forestry, the commercial opportunities for selling pollution control technology overseas, toxic and radioactive wastes and a paper on "the aquatic environment", all papers which Departments are keen to contribute.

4. We have also asked departments to let us have early contributions to a paper which the Cabinet Office will coordinate on the achievements of the Government so far on environmental matters and the resources being devoted to them. You will recall that the Prime Minister and others stressed the importance of bringing out this material in the White Paper. It might be useful to bring it together now at an early stage as background to policy discussions.

5. The letter refers to guidance which the Secretary of State for Energy will be circulating on the disclosure obligation

involved in electricity privatisation. Mr Wakeham is concerned that MISC 141 should not unknowingly endorse or explore options which would have to be revealed and create difficulties in the flotation and would appreciate an opportunity to alert his colleagues to the dangers at this early stage.

6. The work programme will be demanding on Ministerial time. You have already arranged a meeting for 1 February. I had originally hoped that most of the remaining papers could be dealt with in one lengthy meeting at the end of February. But on reflection, given the size of the programme, I think it might be better to split up the work between two or three meetings in the second half of February and early March. You may wish to reserve some slots now.

RTJ.

R T J WILSON
Cabinet Office
19 December 1989

A: MISC 141
(PRM)

DRAFT LETTER FROM CAROLINE SLOCOCK TO ROGER BRIGHT, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.

The Prime Minister has approved the enclosed programme of work for MISC 141 which the Cabinet office has prepared in consultation with Departments. I understand that work is now in hand on the papers shown in the programme and that an exercise is also being carried out to bring together material about the Government's achievements so far on environmental policy and the resources being devoted to it.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer's private office have circulated separately a general line to take in reply to questions about the use of market mechanisms to meet environmental objectives. The Prime Minister has commented that it is important that colleagues should follow this guidance closely in any public utterances and be careful not to arouse expectations. She has also noted that the Secretary of State for Energy will be circulating guidance in connection with electricity privatisation.

I am copying this letter and the enclosure to the private secretaries to other members of MISC 141 and to Sonia Phippard in the Cabinet Office.

CONFIDENTIAL
APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

SCOTTISH OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

The Rt Hon Christopher Patten Esq MP
Secretary of State for the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 3EB

14 December 1989

Dear Chris,

ENVIRONMENT BILL: NATURE CONSERVANCY COUNCIL

Thank you for your letter of 15 December seeking reactions to announcing the appointment of Professor Fred Holliday as Chairman of the Coordinating Committee at the Second Reading.

I support the appointment of Fred Holliday for this task. He has a highly credible scientific track record, wide experience of NCC and nature conservation generally, and he will have the time to devote to this important role. The added attraction, from my point of view, is his Scottish connections.

As you know, I have expressed concerns about the timing of any announcement. If we offer concessions at the beginning of the Bill's Parliamentary scrutiny, then I am not clear what fall-back position we would have if we come under pressure particularly in the House of Lords. On the other hand, I do recognise the importance of capturing as much support as possible for our proposals and the concern which Geoffrey and you have for the Bill's Parliamentary progress. In these circumstances I would be prepared for you to announce the Government's acceptance in principle of an independent chairman at your press conference on 20 December and to announce our intention to appoint Professor Fred Holliday as the independent Chairman of the Coordinating Committee during the Second Reading debate.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Peter Walker, Peter Brooke, John MacGregor and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever,
Malcolm

MALCOLM RIFKIND

PRIME MINISTER

MISC 141

Richard Wilson suggests that I should write out as in the attached, circulating the work programme for Misc 141 which I understand you have already approved.

You will want to look at the Treasury line on market mechanisms at Flag A. This has been circulated to your colleagues today.

Content for me to write in these terms?

CMS

Caroline Slocock
19 December 1989

F

DRAFT
(Submission seeking approval to follow)

MISC 141: PROGRAMME OF WORK

Agreed MT

MEETING AT THE END OF JANUARY

Global Issues

1. Paper by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office assessing the timetable for taking decisions on emissions of greenhouse gases internationally, the UK's stance to date and the likely stance of other major countries.

2. Paper by the Department of the Environment providing global projections of greenhouse gas emissions for the years 2000 and 2020, what reductions in those projections are likely to be required to protect the global climate, and what levels that might imply for the UK.

3. Paper(s) by the Department of Energy on the options for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases from energy use (excluding transport but including industrial and domestic uses), including:

   i. energy efficiency;

   ii. the future contribution of nuclear energy;

   iii. limiting power station emissions.

4. Paper by the Department of Transport on the options for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases in the transport sector.

5. Paper by the Department of the Environment in consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Energy on the options for limiting emissions of methane.

Papers 3, 4 and 5 will cover projections of UK emissions for the years 2000 and 2020 and ways of securing reductions. They will in particular explore the implications of (a) achieving by the year 2000 emissions 20% below the current projection for that year, or (b) holding emissions steady from 2000 onwards at the current projection for that year, or (c) achieving reductions after 2000 so that by 2020 emissions are 20% below the current projection for 2000.

MEETINGS IN THE SECOND HALF OF FEBRUARY/EARLY MARCH

Global Issues

6. Further papers on greenhouse gases commissioned at the previous meeting.

7. Paper by HM Treasury on the relative merits of different instruments for securing reductions in greenhouse gases, including regulation and market-based approaches, and on the associated economic costs.

Regional issues

8. Paper by the Department of Energy on the most effective ways of reducing acid rain emissions. This will include the implications of meeting our existing international obligations, and an assessment of the likely outcome of the reviews which are due between now and the mid-1990s.

National issues

9. Paper by the Department of the Environment in consultation with the Department of Transport on land use and housing.

10. Paper by Department of the Environment in consultation

with the Ministry of Agriculture on the aquatic environment, including rivers, coastal waters and the North Sea.

11. Paper by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in consultation with the Department of the Environment on countryside and agriculture.

12. Paper by the Secretary of State for Scotland on the contribution of forestry.

13. Paper by the Department of Trade and Industry in consultation with the Department of the Environment on waste minimisation and recycling.

14. Paper by the Department of the Environment on waste control and disposal, including toxic and radioactive wastes.

15. Paper by the Department of Trade and Industry on pollution control technology and opportunities for the UK industry in the international market.

16. Paper by the Overseas Development Administration in consultation with the Department of Trade and Industry on aid for environmental measures in developing countries and on technology transfer.

17. Paper by the Chief Scientific Adviser on the UK contribution to environmental research and the arrangements for international co-ordination of research.

MEETING AT THE END OF MARCH

18. Decisions on the approach to climate change to be adopted in the White Paper and forthcoming international discussions, including an agreed negotiating position on

the contribution which the UK would be prepared to make as part of an international effort, the overall levels of greenhouse gas emissions to be achieved globally and how these should be apportioned between countries.

19. Paper by the Department of the Environment reviewing the conclusions so far reached on issues other than climate change, and the issues which remain to be resolved.

20. Outline of Draft White Paper.

Cabinet Office
18 December 1989

chex.ps/mw/15 **RESTRICTED**

A

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG
01-270 3000

18 December 1989

Prime Minister 2

CAS 19/12

P R C Gray Esq
Private Secretary to
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

Dear Paul,

USE OF FISCAL AND OTHER MARKET MECHANISMS TO MEET ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

Ministers agreed at MISC 141(89)1st meeting on the need for care in the presentation of policy on fiscal approaches to environmental problems. The Chancellor undertook to circulate some forms of words which Ministers could use in response to questions in this area.

... I attach some forms of words accordingly - a general line to take followed by some Q and A briefing. The underlying objective is to avoid arousing public expectations which cannot be fulfilled, especially in the short term, while reaffirming the Government's firmness of purpose in its approach to environmental matters.

The Chancellor hopes that his colleagues will find these forms of words helpful and will make a point of using them when questioned about these matters.

I am copying this letter and the attached briefing to the Private Secretaries to the other Ministers on MISC 141 and to Sir Robin Butler.

p1. Market mechanisms inc. taxes will often score better !?

Helpful?!

Yours,

Moira Wallace

MOIRA WALLACE
Private Secretary

VAT on fuel to business in July 1990?
helpful?! p3

USE OF FISCAL AND OTHER MARKET MECHANISMS TO MEET ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

Line to take

- Nearly all ways of tackling environmental problems impose extra costs - on producers, consumers or both. Important in environmental as in other areas to find most cost-effective solutions.

- Market mechanisms, including charges, tradable permits and taxes, will often score better in terms of cost-effectiveness and efficient allocation of resources. Regulation, though sometimes necessary, usually more rigid and less efficient.

- But market based measures, like other measures, may not be feasible or beneficial, especially in short term, and especially if on a dramatic scale. Such measures typically have wider economic, social and industrial consequences which need to be weighed in the balance, not least for -

  inflation
  competitiveness
  viability of existing capital investment
  economic growth and productive potential
  international context
  implications for vulnerable groups in society.

- International dimension especially important in case of global problems such as greenhouse gases emissions. Key requirement in such areas is for action by international agreement, rather than unilateral action. UK responsible for only 3 per cent of world emissions of carbon dioxide. Contribution we can make on our own to solving global warming problem is inevitably small.

- Timescale, too, is all important. Measures which could be highly damaging in short term may make excellent sense if introduced over a period of years and in accordance with international agreements. Key thing is to make steady progress by agreement.

Q AND A BRIEF

Government doing nothing/acting too slowly?

Government deeply conscious of importance of environment. Many steps taken already (eg action on CFCs, SO_2 and NO_x emissions, water quality, unleaded fuel, Climate Change Centre and forthcoming environmental protection Bill). Need to consider best possible scientific analysis of environmental problems, to assess threats and strategies.

Are environmental taxes/tradeable emissions permits under consideration?

No specific proposals for short term. Government will, however, take environmental factors into account across whole range of policies. Need to strike most cost-effective balance between regulation and market measures in developing strategies. Timescale and international dimension often of critical importance.

Will taxes be imposed on coal, gas, electricity?

Prime Minister made clear before last Election that VAT would not be imposed on domestic use of fuel and power. (VAT on supplies of fuel and power to businesses, other than small deliveries, to be introduced from July 1990.)

Is Government going to introduce a carbon tax?

Premature to contemplate such a radical change in short-term. Must take account of effects on economy and industrial competitiveness. Whole area of greenhouse effect and global warming best tackled in international context rather than unilaterally. UK responsible for only 3 per cent of world emissions of carbon dioxide: contribution we can make on our own very small.

Will there be internationally-agreed tax on CO_2 or greenhouse gases emissions?

Prime Minister indicated in her UN General Assembly speech in November that international agreements on such emissions will be needed. Will be subject of much discussion in international meetings over next year or two. Too soon to speculate about extent to which such agreements would cover methods of achieving agreed targets.

Will you raise taxes on petrol/give tax breaks for catalytic converters or fuel efficient cars/introduce tax on non-recyclable goods?

These are matters for the Chancellor.

CONFIDENTIAL AND APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

FILE

KK
Appts

bc P.U

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

18 December 1989

Dear Roger,

ENVIRONMENT BILL: NATURE CONSERVANCY COUNCIL

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's letter of 15 December to the Lord President. She is content with the proposal that Professor Fred Holliday should chair the Joint Committee.

I am copying this letter to Gillian Baxendine (Lord President's Office), Uriel Jamieson (Scottish Office), Keith Davies (Welsh Office), Stephen Pope (Northern Ireland Office), John Ratcliff (Department of Education and Science) and Nicholas Davidson (Cabinet Office).

Yours,
Paul

(PAUL GRAY)

Roger Bright, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

CONFIDENTIAL AND APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

KK

RESTRICTED

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref

The Rt Hon John Wakeham MP
Secretary of State
Department of Energy
Thames House South
Millbank
LONDON
SW1P 4QJ

Prime Minister
CMS
19/12

6 December 1989

CONTROL MEASURES FOR ENERGY RELATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Your minute of 23 November to the Prime Minister covered a report which your department had prepared as the UK input to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and which has now been submitted.

It was clearly right for you to submit this report. We have put such enormous store by the work of the IPCC, and the advice we are expecting from it, that it would clearly have been unthinkable for the UK not to submit such a study on time. We have seen, however, the misuse which the earlier draft of the report was put to and if I, or my officials, get any approaches on the subject I would take the line set out in the attached note; are you content with this?

However important it was to ensure that we submitted this report the emission levels projected in it do demonstrate that normal projections, on reasonable assumptions about world energy costs and economic growth, give results which are incompatible with the mounting international pressures for action by the industrialised countries to contain and reduce total Greenhouse Gas emissions.

We must of course be wary of projections over a 40 year period and of trying to foresee the sort of market conditions which are likely to prevail when average national wealth is 2-3 times higher in real terms than it is today. I would hope and expect that in those circumstances there would be widespread acceptance of the desirability of spending a greater proportion of that new wealth on an improved environment.

Even if the higher projections for CO_2 emissions are discounted, however, it seems clear that your assessment of the need for a concerted effort to alter the present course of the projections across the spectrum of energy supply and use is right. I therefore very much welcome the fact that you will be bringing forward new proposals, particularly on energy efficiency, which will need to be considered in MISC 141. We shall need a strong programme of domestic initiatives to complement our international efforts, if we are to retain the international leadership established in the Prime Ministers speech to UNGA.

I am copying this to the Prime Minister, Douglas Hurd, John Major, Peter Walker, Nicholas Ridley, Malcolm Rifkind, Cecil Parkinson, John Gummer and Sir Robin Butler.

CHRIS PATTEN

Suggested Line to Take on Draft Study

1 This Report is the UK contribution to the "national studies" undertaken for the Energy and Industry Sub Group of the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change. It aims to illustrate present projected levels of energy use and CHG emissions and projected changes in those figures over an extended period until 2030. The study also looks at what is presently known about the technical options available for abating emissions and assesses their possible contribution. The study is not, however, a statement of UK government policy on CHG emissions. Projections over a period of more than 40 years are notoriously difficult and must be treated with great caution. Projections, are of course sensitive to many factors including government policies. The study makes no assumption about changes in Government policy but the UK government remains committed to supporting international efforts to tackle the Greenhouse Effect and will undoubtedly be reviewing its policies in the light of the scientific and other advice of the IPCC.

ENV AFFAIRS: Acid Rain Pt 13

PRIME MINISTER

CHAIRMANSHIP OF JOINT COMMITTEE OF COUNTRYSIDE BODIES

Chris Patten's letter (Flag A) seeks agreement to the appointment of Professor Fred Holliday as the first chairman of the new statutory joint committee bringing together the English, Scottish and Welsh conservation agencies.

Robin Butler (Flag B) supports this proposal.

Content?

Yes

PLG.

PAUL GRAY

15 December 1989

C:\economic\holliday (kk)

CONFIDENTIAL
APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01 276 3000

My ref

Your ref

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP
Lord President of the Council
Privy Council Office
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2AT

15 December 1989

ENVIRONMENT BILL: NATURE CONSERVANCY COUNCIL

I mentioned in my letter yesterday that I hoped to be able to announce the name of the person we have in mind to chair the joint committee at Second Reading.

The man I have in mind for this role is Professor Fred Holliday, at present Vice-Chancellor of Durham University. Professor Holliday, who is a zoologist, was Chairman of the Nature Conservancy Council from 1977-80 and has a distinguished and varied record in the scientific, academic and environmental worlds. He also has strong Scottish connections. He is standing down from his position in Durham next year and, from informal soundings we have made, would be interested in the chairmanship of the joint committee if we were to create such a post.

As you know, I am firmly of the view that an early announcement of our intention to have an independent chairman would do much to ease the passage of the Bill. An announcement that someone of the calibre and with the conservation credentials of Professor Holliday would add considerable credibility to this. I would therefore be very grateful for early reactions from colleagues to this proposal.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Malcolm Rifkind, Peter Walker, Peter Brooke, John MacGregor and Sir Robin Butler.

CHRIS PATTEN

Recycled Paper

GNU AFFAIRS : Acrobat Pro 3

PRIME MINISTER

CANBERRA

SUBJECT CC MASTER OPS

PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL MESSAGE SERIAL No. T218C²/89

14 DEC 1989

R13/1

My dear Margaret

At the recent CHOGM I announced that Australia would invite developing countries to participate in a technical assistance program to provide training for assessing the effects of climate change on rural land productivity.

In line with that initiative, as outlined in the CHOGM communique, I have written to relevant Commonwealth heads of government spelling out the detail of the proposal and inviting them to participate.

For your information, I attach a copy of my letter.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Bob

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
LONDON
ENGLAND

In my statement on the environment at our recent CHOGM in Kuala Lumpur, I said that I would write to each Head of Government to outline, in more detail, an initiative which might be of value to other Commonwealth countries.

I am conscious that, particularly in those Commonwealth countries with limited rural research infrastructure, there is considerable concern about just what the greenhouse effect could mean to rural industries and to the economy as a whole.

Because of our highly variable climate, Australian scientists have been in the forefront of international research in bioclimatology and have developed techniques and models to enable the prediction of growing season characteristics from climate data. These techniques can be applied to rudimentary meteorological records and the models themselves can be used with modest computing facilities such as personal computers. These models enable the assessment of the effects of particular climate changes, for example in temperature or precipitation, on the distribution and productivity of crops, pastures, forests and animals.

In line with Australia's particular expertise in this area, we are proposing to develop a technical assistance program which would provide training in the use of these techniques.

Whether for agronomists, meteorologists or other scientists, expertise in the use of the modelling techniques can be achieved by a training period of three months upwards. At this stage we are thinking of offering a six month course for well qualified staff with emphasis on agroclimatic modelling and the ecological impact of climate change. It would include some scope for applied research utilizing country data. In the longer term there could be opportunity for having more junior scientists trained in a Masters or PhD program. This would be conducted as a special

initiative associated with the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Program.

Australia would fund the attendance of the trainees and the purchase of the necessary equipment.

As we all agreed at CHOGM, the environment is amongst the most pressing issues facing mankind. Through international bodies like the Commonwealth particular expertise, which has been developed in response to specific national circumstances, can be shared, and functional cooperation in such an important field enhanced.

I look forward to receiving an indication of your government's interest in participating in such a program.

(4)

PRIME MINISTER

GREENHOUSE EFFECT

You may be interested to see the attached pamphlet by the George C Marshall Institute in Washington on the greenhouse problem.

Against the current fashion, it predicts that, far from warming the earth in the next century, the greenhouse effect will have the benign effect of halting a new mini-Ice Age. It argues that there are far more powerful forces acting on the earth's atmosphere than man-made pollution, principally the periodic brightening and dimming of the sun. If past patterns are followed, the sun is likely to be less active in the 21st century than in the current one, and this would lead naturally to a cooler earth. "It is possible", says the report, "that the combination of natural and solar variability is the cause of the entire temperature increase of 0.9 degrees F observed since 1880 with the greenhouse effect relegated to a negligible role." The report also points out how difficult it is to make accurate predictions of the greenhouse effect because of the highly variable effect of ocean currents and cloud cover.

I think you will find it worth a read. Its authors are eminently respectable.

CDP

CHARLES POWELL
14 December 1989

c:\wpdocs\foreign\earth.eam

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

13 December 1989

Thank you very much for your letter of 11 December to the Prime Minister.

It was thoughtful of you to prepare this special briefing and I know Mrs Thatcher will study it with interest.

CAROLINE SLOCOCK

Jonathon Porritt Esq

CCHA Hodson

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-276 3000

My ref 39097

Your ref

The Rt Hon Peter Brooke MP
Secretary of State
Northern Ireland Office
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2AZ

NBPM

7 December 1989

file into CAS

Thank you for your letter of 28 November about environmental policy. I welcome your commitment to our initiative, and to improvements in environmental quality in Northern Ireland wherever possible.

I am sure it is right that the White Paper should cover the whole of the UK, and there may be some aspects where arrangements in the Province are different and require some specific reference. My officials will liaise with Mr McQuiston wherever there is a specific Northern Ireland aspect.

I am copying this to Cabinet colleagues and Sir Robin Butler.

CHRIS PATTEN

Recycled Paper

ENV Aff: Anil Rani PT 13

Ref. A089/3262

MR TURNBULL

c Mr Morgan

Chairmanship of Joint Committee of Countryside Bodies

The Secretary of State for the Environment will shortly be proposing to the Prime Minister that Professor Fred Holliday should be appointed as the first independent chairman of the new statutory joint committee bringing together the English, Scottish and Welsh conservation agencies.

2. You might find it useful to know that, in considering the succession to Mr Fairclough as Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir Robin Butler has discussed Professor Holliday with a number of eminent scientists. Professor Holliday will not be put forward as successor to Mr Fairclough, as he is not universally accepted to be in the first rank of scientists. However, during the course of these discussions, attention has been drawn to Professor Holliday's abilities as a chairman, the respect in which he - as an academic biologist - is held by industrialists, his impeccable conservationist credentials and his achievement in 'managerial' terms as Vice-Chancellor of Durham.

3. Sir Robin Butler does not know Professor Holliday personally, but considers that he would be an appropriate chairman of the new Joint Committee.

Sonia Phippard

SONIA PHIPPARD

13 December 1989

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE
LONDON WC2A 2LL

01-936 6269

NBPM

The Rt. Hon. Chris Patten, MP.,
Secretary of State for the Environment,
2 Marsham Street,
London,
SW1.

12 December 1989

Dear Chris,

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BILL : CROWN IMMUNITY

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 24 November to Geoffrey Howe.

The premises on which you approach this problem are similar to my own. In your opening paragraph you take the view

a) that the Departments of central government should be expected to meet legislative standards without the threat of criminal prosecution;

b) that the constitutional and technical difficulties involved in prosecuting the Crown make the case against full waiver of Crown immunity from prosecution;

c) that there is substantial advantage in allowing enforcement agencies a role in relation to the performance of the Crown; though the potential risk of "political" abuse of such powers, as may be said to have occurred in the Faslane case in the planning field, needs to be borne in mind.

With all this I agree and I also understand and sympathise with your wish that in the case of environmental matters Government Departments should be seen to be treated as far as possible in a similar way to other potential transgressors. Indeed I believe this to be a principle which should find more general application.

I note that at present the Bill approaches the problem in a number of different ways.

i) In relation to Integrated Pollution Control and Local Authority Pollution control, and in relation to Radioactive Substances you propose a modified Crown Notice procedure with registers showing details of such notice open to the public; but no system for testing such notices in the courts and no sanction of a judicial declaration of non-compliance.

ii) In relation to Waste Law the duty to exercise reasonable care in disposal reclamation or consignment is to apply only to NHS hospitals. To this extent no constitutional problems arise from criminal enforcement since the health authorities and in future self-governing hospitals are independent bodies distinct from the Crown. But I note that this section does not otherwise bind the Crown because of possible problems of access to restricted areas and perceived problems arising from the fact that the local authority is the enforcement authority.

iii) In the case of Litter the Bill proposes to bind the Crown and to enable the enforcing authorities to seek declarations of non-compliance, but does not provide for public registers.

(iv) In relation to Genetically Modified Organisms where MOD is likely to be the major user of GMOs under the Crown you propose that full criminal liability should apply, though against whom and in what form is not yet specified.

Given the initial premises upon which I think we are both agreed I write to suggest that the approach which you have chosen in relation to Litter, and which has already been chosen for the Food Bill recently published by John Gummer, may be suitable for all four of your categories. The effect would be that the Bill would generally bind the Crown; that the enforcement authorities would be able to play their normal role in relation to Crown premises except in specific cases where national security or other special reason make it inappropriate; and that transgressions should be capable of public exposure and sanction by means of the power granted to enforcement authorities to seek a declaration of non-compliance

in the courts. There is no reason why in appropriate cases such a system should not be accompanied by a system of public registers of enforcement notices.

The only caveat to the above is that it must be recognised that the Crown could find itself vulnerable to periods of intensive enforcement by prosecution by certain local authorities perhaps for mixed motives which there would be no ready way to restrain.

The general effect would be that in every case except that of genetically modified organisms my proposals would strengthen the powers of enforcement against the Crown. While I agree that there is a case for firm sanction in relation to GMOs I would argue that the prospect of a court declaration in such a sensitive area would be a very real sanction in itself; whereas actual criminal sanctions are likely to demonstrate the same practical disadvantages relating to nature of penalty, nature of individual to suffer such penalty etc that they have shown in the past.

I am copying this letter to members of MISC. 138, Tom King, David Waddington, Richard Luce, Alan Rodger and to Sir Robin Butler and First Parliamentary Counsel.

Yours ever

Nick.

EXT AFFAIRS: ACJRA
PT 13

Prime Minister 4

I have sent an acknowledgement on your behalf

MDS 15/12

CF file

Friends of the Earth

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher
10 Downing Street,
London SW1.

R13

11th December 1989

cc Ms Sinclair (with attachment)

You may like to have this.

CAD

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for allowing me half an hour out of your hectic schedule. I much enjoyed discussing so many important issues, and found it most constructive. I am sorry the Press seem to have made such a meal of it!

Two particular points emerged about recycling: the payment of rebates and the role of supermarkets in providing recycling facilities. I have prepared a special briefing for you on these matters, which I hope you will find of interest.

I have forwarded the same information to Chris Patten.

Yours sincerely

Jonathon Porritt

Jonathon Porritt
Director

enc.

HELP THE EARTH FIGHT BACK

26-28 Underwood Street London N1 7JQ Telephone 01 490 1555 Fax 01 490 0881

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C. RESTRICTED

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 December 1989

CDP 6/12.

Dear Charles,

Forestry Initiative

I enclose Mrs Chalker's latest report on the forestry initiative. It includes the second edition of the ODA's forestry supplement to be published later this month.

Yours,

Stephen Wall

(J S Wall)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

C. RESTRICTED

Verbatim Service

VERBATIM SERVICE VS094/89 MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 1989

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POPULATION GROWTH: IS IT A PROBLEM THAT SHOULD CONCERN US?

ADDRESS GIVEN AT THE POPULATION CONCERN CONFERENCE, HARROGATE, 13 NOVEMBER BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LYNDA CHALKER MP, MINISTER FOR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT

As a politician and a Government Minister I am lucky enough to meet and talk to many people from all over the world. Many are famous., most are influential. But you today offer me the opportunity to talk to the most important group of all., young people. You are our future. Disraeli put it well when he said that the Youth of the Nation are the Trustees of Posterity. On your shoulders will rest the most difficult problems and decisions of the 21st Century. There will undoubtedly be many. That is why I am delighted to talk to you about population growth., an issue which I believe will be central in the next 20-30 years not just to Third World development but to the future of our planet and to the well being of you, your family and friends. I do not presume to impose on you my own judgements about this challenging subject. Instead, I want to set out the facts and figures (but not too many) on which these judgements have been made. I hope you will take them away., think about them., and come to your own decisions as to whether population growth is a problem which should concern you.

The First Five Thousand Million

To decide whether population growth is a problem we need to take a historical look at the pattern of that growth. Remember that the United Kingdom's current population is about 57 million. But back to the pattern of growth. For most of human pre-history populations grew very slowly. When men were emerging from caves about 5 million people lived on the earth. Let me tell you a litte story about numbers of people and our heritage. Those 5 million Cro Magnon people lived in caves like the ones at Lascaux in the Perigord region of France, which I visited this summer. Now, only 25 people a week are allowed to visit the original caves to protect them and their art from the potential pollution of carbon dioxide. You see, even too much breathing can pollute. Agricultural improvements stimulated growth and the total population grew to about 170m by the time of Christ. The first thousand million was reached early in the 19th century - less than 200 years ago. The second thousand million took about a century more to 1920. The third took just 40 years to 1960., the fourth, 14 years., and the fifth thousand million was added just 13 years later in 1987. A powerful picture. So, since 1950, world population has doubled. We can expect to add the sixth billion by the end of the century. A further 4 billion will be added before world population levels out as some predict at 10.4 billion in the last half of the 21st Century.

The Future

These are startling facts to come to terms with, particularly as we live in a country with an almost stable population. Indeed, I can hear you saying ''is she sure., is she right? My grandmother was one of 14 children., my mother one of 4., and I have only a brother or a sister. Are these figures really true.''

I am sure, and the reasons are simple. Although global population growth rates have slowed - they were highest in the 1960s when we added that third billion - the number of people we add each year is still growing and will continue to grow. This phenomenon is called ''population momentum''. It happens because the next decade's parents are already born - you are in this room. Even if each of you has fewer children than your parents the number of women who will reach child-bearing age in the next 10 years will rise and so the annual number of births will follow. Thanks to advances in medical science and other interventions like clean water and sanitation more of these children survive. Since 1950 under 5 mortality in Africa has dropped from 300 per 1,000 children born to about 180. The consequence of this progress is that in 1950 we added 50 million people to the world., but in 1990 we will add 87 million.

Where these people are added is also important. I have already pointed out that this country's population is almost stable., some European countries' populations, like West Germany and Sweden, are actually declining. Future population growth will be heavily concentrated in the developing countries. Their populations can be expected to grow from about 3.9 billion now to a plateau of about 9 billion early in the next century. These global figures mask some quite amazing individual stories. Even assuming that the birth rate in developing countries drops soon - a very hopeful assumption for most of Sub-Saharan Africa and many Muslim countries in South Asia - Kenya's population of 24 million will almost double by the end of the century., Bangladesh's 112 million will almost treble by 2030., and Nigeria's 109 million could grow to 529 million by 2035 AD. 529 million is more than the whole population of Africa in 1950. It would leave Nigeria 5 times more densely settled than France is today. And I haven't even mentiond the two countries with the largest population in the world, China and India.

North versus South

So population growth is a South problem you might well say. We in the North have been sensible., our families are small., we are ''safe''. But are we? Every aspect of economic, social and political life in the developing world will be affected by growing population pressure. In today's world there is growing inter-dependence between developed and developing countries. The problems associated with population growth in the South will come to affect us too. There are 5 good reasons why I think we should care about high population growth rates in the South.

First North and South share a common environment. Population pressure can overload the capacity of the environment to support sustainable development in many developing countries. Environments do vary in their ability to support more people but rapid population growth, coupled with wasteful and polluting technologies, increases the chances that resources will be over-exploited and life supporting systems of soils, forest and climate degraded.

More people demand more fuel and more food. Most of the world's productive agricultural land is already worked. Without suitable technologies to increase its productivity or the prospect of alternative employment for growing populations more forests will be destroyed to provide farm land.

Forests are also cut for fuel wood - the main source of energy for

one in four people in the world - and for commercial reasons.

Increased forest burning for farming and combustion of fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and accelerates global warming., a phenomenon I am sure I do not need to explain to you. As a result, sea levels could rise threatening low lying areas - including those in Britain. This could create major problems associated with resettling 'environmental' refugees. The destruction of forests brings other dangers. The tropical rain forests are home to millions of plant and animal species. Many of these have unusual and valuable properties. A large number of the pills and potions that improve and sustain our health began life in these forests. We destroy them and their genetic diversity at our peril. But in protecting the forests we must not forget that they are for people. The challenge is to manage them in such a way that we take fuel wood, timber and other products from them at a rate which ensures the next generation will be able to benefit from them too.

So, the slower world population grows, the greater the chance that food production will keep pace with demand., the slower the greenhouse effect will develop., and the more likely that our renewable natural resource base will be able to support sustainable economic development.

Developed and developing countries are also economically inter-dependent. Slower population growth in poor countries can often mean faster growing standards of living and we all benefit from this. A more prosperous Africa allows Africans to buy more of our goods and services. This will enable some of you to earn your living making these. We will also benefit from a wider range and quality of African tea, coffee, fruits, vegetables, handicrafts, electronic goods and better access as tourists to their fascinating landscapes and cultures.

Why should slower growth of population help countries lke Kenya, Pakistan or China to become better off? I will mention just two obvious reasons. When parents have very large families it is more difficult to provide them with adequate nutrition, health and education and so they are likely to be less capable, skilful and productive when they are old enough to work than if the family were smaller.

Governments as well as families have to spend so much of their revenues just ''keeping up'' with the fast rising numbers of people that they do not save enough of their income to improve the tools and technology available to each worker or to improve the yields from the often limited land on which they labour. It is rather like walking up the 'down' escalator - it can be done but it is very difficult and exhausting. A good example is the fact that Kenya with a population less than half the size of the United Kingdom already has more school-age children than we do.

Health is my third global concern. Disease is no respecter of frontiers. The poor living conditions in which large populations live in the developing world provide good conditions for the evolution of new infections. Modern transport brings the danger of these diseases very close to us.

The fourth reason is the need for global security. Competition for land, water, food and other resources, from a fast growing population can act as a breeding ground for conflict. Confrontations between developing countries do not remain ''South-to-South'' affairs. Developed countries will find it difficult not to be drawn in.

My fifth and final reason is perhaps the most powerful. In simple humanitarian terms we cannot stand by and see more than three-quarters of the world grow poorer., unhealthier., and hungrier while we grow richer. We can and we should help - and I shall turn in a moment to how we can do so. The important thing, though, is that the developing countries themselves should embark on a path of sustained, continuous growth. They need that as well as help from the developed world. As I have already explained, high population growth hampers economic growth and discourages the investment needed to improve education., agriculture., health., and industrial development in the Third World. In some of the poorest countries food production has already fallen behind population growth. Population growth also extracts a heavy health toll from mothers and children in the South. We know that the number, spacing and timing of pregnancies has a profound effect on the health of mothers and children. In her lifetime an African mother has a 1 in 21 chance of dying as a result of pregnancy as against 1 in over 2,000 in the UK. In Bangladesh, more than 1 in 10 children die before they celebrate their first birthday, as against 1 in 100 in the United Kingdom.

High population growth and poverty go hand in hand. I doubt there is one of you here today who has not cared enough to raise money or give a contribution to a ''development'' charity to help alleviate that poverty. I believe if you care about one, you cannot help but care about the other. The need to address population issues is fundamental to the future well-being of our planet. However, tackling these issues will not be easy.

What can we do to help?

So what can we do to help slow population growth? Let us first look at why people have children - remember in this country women have on average 1.8 children., but a Nigerian mother has 6.6 and a Bangladeshi 5.8. In poor rural societies it is considered that the benefits of having children outweigh the cost. There are no old age pensions. Parents look to children to look after them in their old age. Children are also extra pairs of hands in the field. Where infant and child mortality are high, parents may need to have a large number of children to ensure that enough survive to perform these basic duties. In some cultures there are additional pressures to have large families. Where women have low status., few property rights., and litle security in widowhood or divorce they aim to have as many sons as possible to secure their own futures.

Should we in the developed world try to influence these sensitive social issues and if so how? You will have already guessed that I believe we should put population issues high on our international agenda if we are serious about helping developing countries to evolve strategies for their own sustainable development. But what I am talking about is population planning - not population control. I also believe that, if we evolve with them strategies for their development, there are sensible things that we can undertake within our Aid Programme.

Where do we Start?

So, where do we start? First, the people of developing countries must have the will to solve their own problems. We can help them, but their own Governments need to accept that high population growth is a problem. A decade ago this was difficult. Many governments claimed that economic developments coupled with reform of the world economic system was the best route to lower birth rates. Today almost all countries have accepted that economic and social development and family planning have to be encouraged side by side in order to slow population growth. Many have put national programmes in place to increase information on and access to family planning services. Some

of them are impressive., Zimbabwe., India., Indonesia., Thailand and others are achieving lower birth rates through these programmes. But in many countries the programmes are reaching no more than a minority. Shortages of finance., manpower., and infrastructure are obstacles., but so are attitudes. I believe we can and should help in all these areas.

Britain's current aid budget is in excess of £1,500 million. Much of this aid effort indirectly affects the prospects for slowing population growth rate because its general objective is to improve economic and social development in the poorest countries of the world. The fundamental process of economic reform, called structural adjustment, which many developing countries are going through with help from donors like ourselves, will in my view have a very real impact on the longer term prospects for reducing birth rates. However, I also believe that in the short term we need to target some of our aid very specifically on programmes which have a direct effect on population growth rates. These are, in the main, those designed to promote and provide contraceptive advice and expertise.

Our Government has a good record in this respect. We have consistently been a major donor to the main multilateral population programmes., the United Nation Population Fund., the International Planned Parenthood Federation., and the World Health Organisation's Human Reproduction Programme. Our annual contribution to these programmes has more than doubled since 1982 and that grant is now more than £14m. In 1988 we provided 300% more support than in the previous year for population-related projects run by Non-Governmental Organisations. I am pleased that Population Concern, our host today, have particularly benefited from this. In our bilateral health assistance programme we are putting increased emphasis on programmes to improve the health of mothers and children, particularly through the provision of family planning services. This is all good stuff, but I want to do more, and I shall be looking for opportunities to do so over the coming years.

We know from surveys that many women exposed to pregnancy want no more children. Many of these women are not using contraceptives for fear of social disapproval., rumours of health risks., or real side effects. More commonly it is because they do not know where to obtain contraceptives or because the source is too far away. We have to help these women secure their right to access to effective family planning services. Women are also more likely to use effecive methods of contraception if their status is improved. Improving women's access to education is a key factor. We are already helping here, but much more needs to be done.

None of this will be easy. There are religious., cultural., and personal sensitivities surrounding family planning. We cannot and should not dismiss them. But neither should we magnify them. All religions and cultures believe in and encourage responsible parenthood. All religions and cultures want happy, healthy and fulfilled children. The spacing of births and the size of families are important if these aims are to be met. We must ensure that couples have a free and informed choice about the number and spacing of their children. We must ensure that family planning services are never coercive. In short we must take a sensible and balanced view on the issue of contraception and encourage others to do so too.

Conclusion

There is a saying in rural communities in many parts of the world which reminds farmers that the land they till, on which they sow, and from which they harvest, is actually leased to them from their grandchildren. ''The rent you pay for that land,'' the saying continues ''is your obligation to protect and preserve its

fertility.''

That saying applies not just to the land but also to the rest of the natural environment on which our survival and progress depends - our air, our seas and our rivers, our flora and our fauna.

Continuing high population growth is going to make that rent much more expensive. I do not believe we can afford to turn our backs on the problems raised by high population growth rates. To ignore population growth is to hasten environmental degradation. Tackling population issues will take us into difficult, sensitive, moral and cultural mine fields. We must choose our way carefully. We must encourage the developing countries to use their expertise and resources to tackle the problems too, but tackle them I believe we must. There is no time to lose if you, your children and your children's children are to inherit a planet worthy of your true potential.

ENDS VS094/89

ODA FORESTRY PROJECTS

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ODA FORESTRY PROJECTS

Introduction

1. This report lists ODA financed projects in the forestry sector. It includes projects financed through the bilateral country programmes in the current financial year, as well as those in preparation. In addition, it includes centrally funded forestry research projects, and projects managed by British NGOs (such as Oxfam and the World Wide Fund for Nature) which ODA is cofinancing.

2. It is the practice not to publicise details of projects in preparation. The report is therefore classified Restricted. Copies without the section on projects in preparation are available on request from NRED/ODA. These may be distributed to any interested parties who request copies.

Natural Resources and Environment Department, ODA
November 1989

RESTRICTED

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

FORESTRY PROJECTS

Natural Resources and Environment Department, ODA

November 1989

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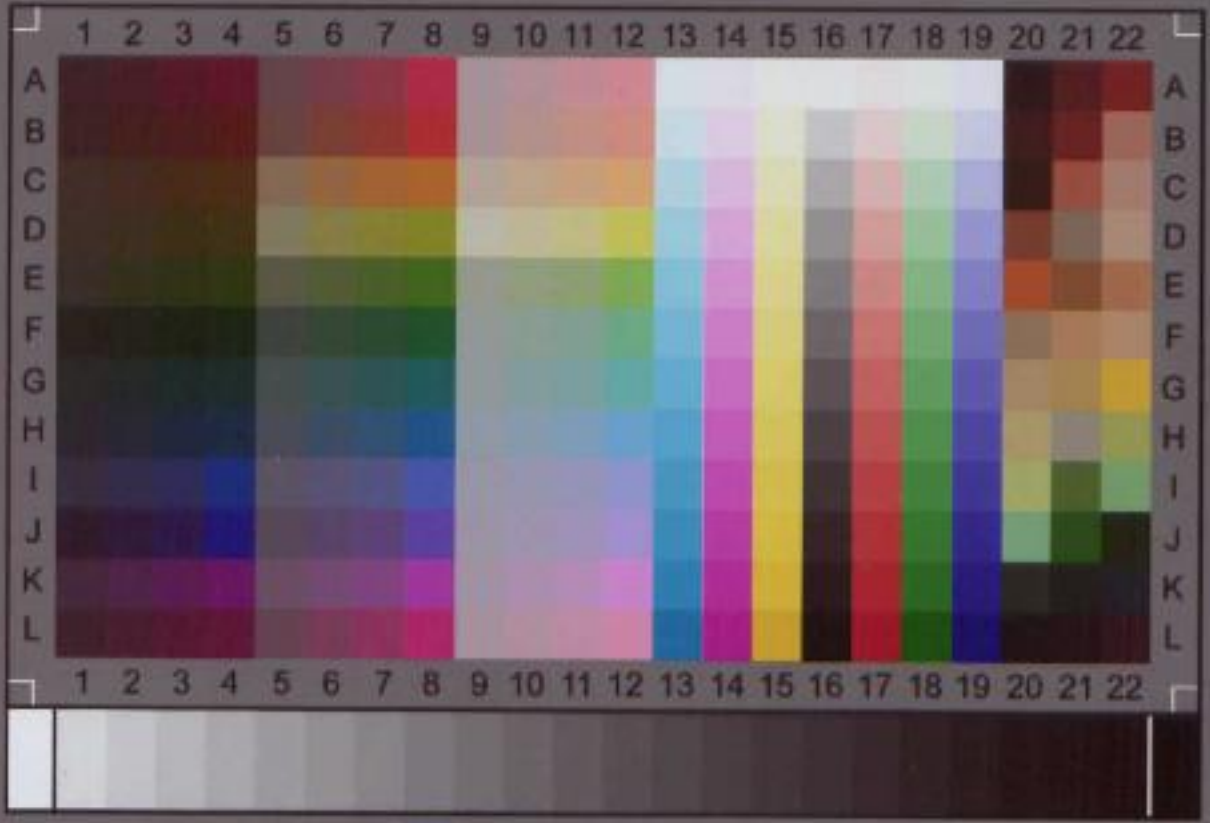
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