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PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

You are due to visit the Department of Energy at 1430 tomorrow. We have set aside 2½ hours for the visit. I have arranged for you to have a meeting with the Secretary of State, Mr. Lamont (Mr. Hamish Gray and Mr. Moore are unable to be present), the Permanent Secretary and six other senior officials. This meeting could continue as long as you wished, but I have arranged for you to meet a cross-section of more junior staff over tea from 4 o'clock onwards. The meeting will be in Mr. Howell's room, and the tea in the room of the Permanent Secretary (Sir Jack Rampton).

I attach:

Flag A - a note from Mr. Howell outlining the main energy issues facing the Government.

Flag B - a note by Sir Kenneth Berrill which raises a number of questions.

Flag C - a note from the Cabinet Office.

Flag D - Sir John Hunt's original briefing note.

Flag E - a list of the people whom you will meet.

I think you will find Mr. Howell's note pretty thin, and it fails to set out a clear timetable - which we had asked for - for bringing the various issues forward for collective consideration. You will want to ask Mr. Howell to expand on the issues in his note; and you will then no doubt want to question him and his officials. Ken Berrill's note provides a very useful quarry for such questioning; his note and the Cabinet Office note at Flag C suggest that the Department needs to concentrate its mind fast and clearly on a number of key issues. It would

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be good if you could establish a suitable sense of urgency in the Department, and make it clear that you want papers on all the issues mentioned by Mr. Howell - as well as the interest relief grant issue mentioned in the Cabinet Office brief - to be considered by Ministers collectively; and all this before the summer recess at the very latest.

12.

17 May 1979

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