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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

15 March, 1982.

Privatisation of the National Coal Board's Open Cast Operations

15 14
The Prime Minister has seen the Energy Secretary's paper of 4 March on the possibilities for privatisation of open cast mining. I understand that this paper is to be discussed at a meeting of E(DL) on Wednesday, 17 March.

The Prime Minister is not wholly convinced by the arguments in Mr. Lawson's paper. She would be grateful if the Chancellor would consult her before a final decision on this matter is taken.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Julian West (Department of Energy).

M. C. SCHOLAR

Peter Jenkins, Esq.,
HM Treasury.