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Prime Minister

CONSEQUENCES OF PRICE RESTRAINT FOR BRITISH AGRICULTURE

With his letter of 30 September conveying our paper on the consequences of price restraint for British agriculture, Michael Jopling enclosed one on the question of privatising the Forestry Commission's estate.

I am grateful to Michael for his contribution to this important question and for the group's report, which will provide us with a useful starting point. We shall, however, need to weigh carefully a number of important matters not fully considered by the group.

As lead Forestry Minister, I intend to convene a meeting of the Forestry Ministers and the Chairman of the Forestry Commission, Sir David Montgomery, following which I intend to put in hand a thorough study of the options and their ramifications.

I am copying this letter to Geoffrey Howe, Nigel Lawson, Willie Whitelaw, Nick Edwards, Michael Jopling, Tom King, Norman Tebbit and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

G.Y.

Agriculture 9/83

Expenditure

F.R.

