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29 January 1986

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON ENERGY: REPORT ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY OFFICE

The Select Committee reported on the Energy Efficiency Office in November. Its report, whilst dealing mainly with the work of the Office, also commented upon programmes and policies of other Departments that influence the improvement of energy efficiency. The draft response attached therefore covers a similar range.

The Committee welcomed the creation of the Office and broadly endorsed its programmes. They considered, however, that it was receiving inadequate support from other Departments and pointed particularly to the opportunities available for improving energy efficiency in Government's own estate. I know how much you and other colleagues are supporting the energy efficiency campaign, and the response deals at some length with the initiatives now being taken in the public sector. The Committee's perceptions are therefore wrong, but they illustrate how easy it is for different parts of Government to appear to be holding back. I hope, therefore, that you and other colleagues will take particular care during Energy Efficiency Year to avoid policy initiatives which seem to run counter to this campaign. We all need to keep in mind that £7 billion could be cut from the nation's energy bill.

The Committee are expecting the response very shortly and I should therefore be grateful for your comments by Monday, 3 February. For convenience, I attach a list of the Committee's recommendations and the paragraphs in the response that address them.

I am sending a copy of this letter and the attachments to the Prime Minister, Nigel Lawson, George Younger, Norman Fowler, David Young, Nicholas Ridley, Malcolm Rifkind, Nicholas Edwards, Tom King, Paul Channon, Richard Luce, and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Peter Walker

PETER WALKER

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