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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT  
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

Prime Minister (2)

MUS 14/5

13 May 1982

Michael Scholar Esq  
Private Secretary to the  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

Dear Michael,

LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

When I wrote to you about this on 15 March I said that my Secretary of State planned to bring forward his package of measures in May and to hold the necessary debate before the Whitsun Recess.

Since then Mr Howell and other Department of Transport Ministers have sought to persuade Government backbenchers of the great environmental and economic advantages of the package, and have obtained useful support from outside bodies - including the CBI, the Freight Transport Association and the NFU - in this task of persuasion. Nevertheless, the Chief Whip takes the view that we are still not absolutely sure of having sufficient support on the Government's side in the House of Commons for the package, and that, in view of the other preoccupations of Members, it is not wise to attempt to adhere to the previous timetable.

Mr Howell, with reluctance, accepts that there must be a little more delay. It is, however, his firm intention to introduce the package in mid-June leading to a debate in early July. In the meanwhile, the three Department of Transport Ministers will continue to make every effort to persuade backbench opinion on the merits of the package, both industrial and environmental. He hopes to make recommendations on the precise timing of the introduction of the package within the next fortnight.

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I am copying this letter to Private Secretaries of other members of "E" and to the Lord President, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales, the Leader of the House of Lords and the Chief Whip and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

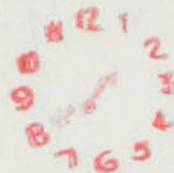
Yours Sincerely

Toby Johns

T. JOHNS  
Private Secretary

CONFIDENTIAL

3 MAY 1982



3 MAY 1982



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

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LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Thank you for your letter of 15 March about your Secretary of State's consultations with Government Backbenchers following the discussion in E Committee on 18 February.

The Prime Minister is content with the approach which your Secretary of State is following.

I am sending copies of this letter to Private Secretaries to other members of E Committee, to David Heyhoe (Lord President's Office), John Holmes (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Muir Russell (Scottish Office), John Craig (Welsh Office), Jim Buckley (Office of the Leader of the House of Lords), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

M. C. SCHOLAR

Toby Johns, Esq.,  
Department of Transport.

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cc. J.V.



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2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

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Prime Minister

Michael Scholar Esq  
Private Secretary to the  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

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BT

Agree to mail approach?

Mis 15/3

15 March 1982

Yes  
mt

Dear Michael

LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

At E Committee (82)5th on 18 February, my Secretary of State undertook to consult the Government's supporters and to report back before making any announcement.

Extensive soundings of Government backbenchers in the Commons lead the Chief Whip and Mr Howell to conclude that support for the package of measures discussed at E is not yet quite firm enough to ensure a convincing majority if the package is brought forward immediately. More time is needed to persuade the Government's supporters of the great environmental and economic advantages of the package. Because of the time required to make and lay orders etc. this rules out a debate before Easter. It is undesirable to give the issue unnecessary prominence in the period between Easter and the local elections. My Secretary of State therefore now plans to bring forward the package in May and if possible to hold the debate before the Whitsun Recess. Mr Howell is confident that by then a majority can be obtained for the measures. He will of course report back before making any announcement.

I am copying this letter to Private Secretaries to other members of E and to the Lord President, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales, the Leader of the House of Lords and the Chief Whip, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours Sincerely

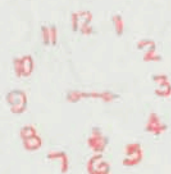
Toby Johns

T. JOHNS  
Private Secretary

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT  
SOUTH AFRICA

14 5 MAR 1982



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