



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

25 January 1985

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*CDP  
26/1*

*Dear Charles,*

Prime Minister's Talks with Lubbers: Environment

Following yesterday's meeting of the High Level Group on vehicle emissions it may be useful (we have not been able to consult the Foreign Secretary) for the Prime Minister to raise the subject with Dr Lubbers. I attach a short, self-explanatory speaking note.

We have also heard from the Dutch that Dr Lubbers may raise acid rain and discharges into the sea.

On acid rain, the UK has made significant progress in reducing SO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which are down nearly 40% from 1970 and over 20% from 1980. Our aim of 30% reduction from 1980 levels for both SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> by the end of the century is evidence of our continued determination. We may do better, but find it difficult to accept the unnecessarily rigid measures proposed in the EC Large Plants Directive. Neither the EC nor the ECE ("30% Club" of which the Netherlands are a member) proposals take account of the substantial progress already made by the UK.

On discharges into the sea, the UK approach is to set standards for individual discharges by reference to an objective for the quality of the water. Other countries use fixed limits of discharge irrespective of the quality of the water. A meeting of experts on the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of International Water Courses, held at Strasbourg on 24 January, has produced alternative language which is acceptable to us and also, we hope, to the Dutch.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to the Private Secretary to Norman Tebbit and to David Williamson (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever,  
Colin Budd*

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

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## EUROPEAN COMMUNITY: VEHICLE EMISSIONS

### Introduction

In this week's meeting of the High Level Group on Vehicle Emissions, the Dutch revealed that their Parliament had demanded a report by 1 April on how their Government planned to fall in line with the proposed German measures. This has undoubtedly given the Germans encouragement and has further complicated the negotiations.

### Points to Make

1. This is an immediate problem. Dutch and UK have been working together to reconcile:
  - German political needs
  - preservation of the internal market
  - interests of the hard pressed European car industry
  
2. Early adoption of US standards would require use of expensive and inefficient technology.
  
3. Recognise that Dutch Parliament's determination to follow the German example leaves you in a difficult position. But important to allow time for Community to agree a set of sensible and cost-effective European standards.
  
4. Therefore urge you to:
  - persuade Parliament to allow time for Community wide agreement to emerge
  - continue to work with us to persuade the Germans that a Community solution is essential.



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