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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD  
WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON SW1A 2HH



From the Minister

CONFIDENTIAL

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

Blf for meeting, 12/11

4 November 1986

*M. J. Pling Prime Minister*

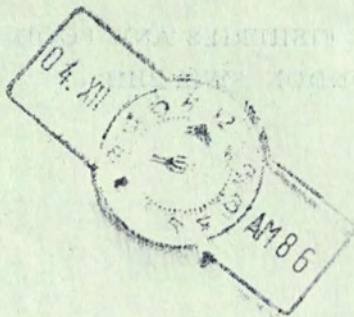
In advance of your meeting on agricultural land use and related issues scheduled for 20 November, you may be interested to see the enclosed letter from Emma Nicholson. I have replied to it in suitable terms.

In my view, it does emphasise the importance politically of our bringing forward positive policies to maintain political support in our rural heartlands. At a time when quite properly farmers are being asked to retrench in a world of agricultural surpluses, there is a need to show them that we are bent on moving forward, and that there is a measure of hope and encouragement for their future.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Lord President, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretaries of State for Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Environment and Employment, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Chief Secretary and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*James Evans  
Michael*

MICHAEL JOPLING



COMPTROLLER

GENERAL



## Conservative Central Office

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From  
THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY  
Miss Emma Nicholson

6 October 1986

The Rt Hon Michael Jopling MP  
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food  
Whitehall Place  
LONDON  
SW1

Dear Michael -

The reports which I received from a number of area branches of the Conservative Womens National Committee expressed a good deal of concern amongst farmers about the future of agriculture.

These reports indicate that farmers believe it is insufficiently realised that they have become the victims of their own success in increasing productivity more than has been achieved in most British industry. It is realised that there are food surpluses within the EEC and that the building up of these surpluses cannot continue indefinitely. But, farmers make the point that certainly over the last 2 years their incomes have been reduced in real terms - in some cases quite substantially - whereas profits and earnings in the rest of the British industry and commerce have on average increased in real terms. Farmers are worried that if this trend is allowed to continue many of them, particularly those farming on a small scale will be forced out of the business and this is thoroughly bad for jobs in rural areas. They believe that the farming industry is being left in a state of uncertainty and are badly in need of reassurance about the future.

I would be most grateful for your comments and it would be very helpful if I could have them by the end of this month.

Yours,  
Emma

EMMA NICHOLSON

Euro Po: Cap PT14

