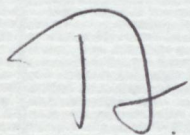


PRIME MINISTER

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PUBLIC INQUIRIES

H Committee discussed both delays and disruptions at major public inquiries and whether improvements in compensation arrangements might obviate them. Overall the Committee were not impressed by the idea of legislating to restrict the scope of inquiries and preferred instead to encourage the Environment Secretary to proceed with changes to procedural rules such as clarifying the regulatory powers already available to inspectors and better use of the pre-inquiry period. They also encouraged the Environment and Transport Secretaries to look at the possibility of excluding through administrative means repetitive re-examination of general policy issues from the scope of specific inquiries. The Committee ruled out proposals for increasing compensation: they thought that the amount of expenditure was disproportionate to the likely benefit.



Tim Flesher

4 October 1985