

Minister of State for
the Environment, Countryside
and Local Government



Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 3EB
Telephone 01-212 3434

Dear Geoff,

ACID RAIN

Following this afternoon's discussion at E(A) I attach a draft Statement, approved by my Secretary of State, for issue tomorrow.

In Mr Ridley's absence, Mr Waldegrave will be dealing with press queries and interviews in the course of a visit to Cumbria tomorrow. This office will therefore be responsible for finalisation of the draft Statement.

The Minister and I will be leaving London early tomorrow morning. If the Statement is to issue at 11.00 am, we will need comments (to Alan Downey in this office) by 9.00 am tomorrow morning. I am copying this to Jill Rutter, Colin Budd, David Williamson at Cabinet Office and to Number 10.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Ghosh

MRS H F GHOSH
Private Secretary

Geoff Dart Esq

~~Prime Minister~~
This seems to me
accurately to reflect the
conclusions of E(A). Content?
(I shall ^{phone} telegraph out any
amendments to this text.)

DLG
10/9

DRAFT PRESS NOTICE

GOVERNMENT PROPOSES NEW ACTION TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM OF ACID RAIN

Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for the Environment, this morning issued the following Statement:

"The Government has authorised the Central Electricity Generating Board to pursue proposals to the following effect:

a. that future coal-fired power stations should be fitted with flue gas desulphurisation (FGD), to the requirements of the Industrial Air Pollution Inspectorate;

b. that 6,000 MW of existing generating capacity, equivalent to three 2,000 MW stations (selected to maximise the advantage to be derived from rerouting higher sulphur coals) should be retrofitted with FGD equipment, starting with the recently completed extension to the Drax power station. The retrofit programme should be phased over the period 1988 to 1997.

These decisions on retrofitting are subject to the necessary detailed engineering studies ^{and} consultations with planning authorities. These studies and consultations will be undertaken now.

No final decision will be taken to commence retrofitting ^{the} installation until next Spring's Report from the Royal Society and the Scandinavian Academies of Science on surface water acidification has been received and studied".

equipment
Note for Editors

might The CEGB estimate that the cost of retrofitting flue gas desulphurisation to 3 power stations will be £600m. There will be some additional operating costs. It is estimated that this ^{as much as} ~~would~~ add 1 1/2% to electricity prices by the end of the programme.

⊗ ~~discussion~~ of appropriate financial arrangements and



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

Prime Minister

This seems to me accurately to reflect the conclusions of E(A).

The press release is completely deadpan and good publicity will depend heavily on how it is presented by Mr Waldegrave and press officers. But it doesn't look feasible to agree an expanded version in the time available. Careless drafting could prove expensive.

Content? (I shall phone out any changes.)

Yes no

BRW
10/9