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memorandum

Self

2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB  
01-276 3000

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My ref:

Your ref:

Prime Minister

A useful round-up of  
action being taken on points  
covered in your talk with

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AA

Crispin Tickell. You will note

August 1989

that Mr. Patten strongly supports

the idea that you should address the  
Dear Charles via this autumn on the environment

#### INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Thank you for sending me copies of your letters of 28 July and 2 August about the Prime Minister's talks with Sir Crispin Tickell.

The Secretary of State is keen that the UK should whenever and wherever possible take the credit which the Prime Minister has gained for us for advancing the international debate on global climate change. Our early support for working through UNEP and the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has paid off handsomely. The IPCC has established itself as the major international forum and it is now well supported by both developed and developing countries: the UK's Chairmanship of the Science Group should ensure a firm basis for the World Climate Conference next year; our announcement of support for a framework convention has proved critical within the Response Strategy Working Group. There are thus ample opportunities to take forward the points in your letters and the Secretary of State is planning to talk to Sir Crispin when he is in the UK in early September.

#### Economic Aspects of the Environment

As you know, the Secretary of State has appointed Professor David Pearce as his Special Adviser and we are delighted by the response to his report on Sustainable Development which we launched this week. We are asking Professor Pearce to consider whether the interdepartmental paper which was the basis for our successful initiative at the Paris Summit could be expanded into a publication of more general interest, possibly as one of our Environment in Trust leaflets. We will also be developing proposals for taking the work forward in the OECD, in the IPCC and (as stressed at the Summit) as an input to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. The Treasury, as well as other interested Departments, will of course be closely involved.

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#### Funds for Environmental Research

Following the Prime Minister's meetings, the Department's commitment to research on global climate change has been thoroughly reviewed. In the context of this year's Survey, the Secretary of State will be proposing a substantial increase in resources, partly for work on effects but also to set up a new Climate Change Centre at the Met Office in order to maintain our world lead in modelling. The balance of priorities is of course a matter for the Research Councils, but the Department's Chief Scientist will be pressing hard for greater priority for environmental research. We are pleased to see from John Fairclough's letter of 8 August that he too is arguing along these lines.

#### UN General Assembly

The Secretary of State warmly supports the idea of the Prime Minister attending the General Assembly. This was floated informally by our delegation on their return from UNEP's Governing Council where it became clear that this year's environment debate in New York would be of crucial importance. Since UNGA will be used to promote the themes of The Hague Declaration the Secretary of State believes that a Prime Ministerial speech would offer a strong and positive counterbalance. He would not expect it to concentrate solely on climate change: it could cover other areas where the UK has a better track record than many other Western countries - our high commitment on tropical forests; our initiatives on the ozone layer; our lead on the economics of sustainable development; our work on energy efficiency; and our wholehearted financial and political support for strengthening UNEP. The Secretary of State has however commented that to make a major impact the speech would need to announce some new and concrete steps, possibly aimed at better tackling the environmental problems of developing countries.

#### Population Growth

The Secretary of State agrees on the need for fuller account to be taken of the implications of population growth. Indeed, if population growth were greatly to exceed 10 billion at the end of the next century it might not be possible to contain man-made climate change. However, the issue requires great sensitivity and is undoubtedly best conducted in the overall framework of sustainable development. Next year's Ministerial meeting in Bergen on the Brundtland Report could be a promising forum in which to develop our ideas. Sir Crispin's immediate concern on the effects of climate change on human habitation should be well covered in the IPCC Impacts Group under Soviet chairmanship.

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Our Own Forests and Woodlands

The Secretary of State is familiar with UK's good record on forest management. He is not persuaded that further home based initiatives in a temperate climate would have any great impact on those facing quite different problems in conserving tropical rain forests. Nevertheless our efforts in this sector could be presented more positively.

International Environmental Institutions

The Secretary of State has read Sir Crispin's speech and is looking forward to seeing the assessment being prepared by this Department and the FCO on strengthening UNEP and improving the UN's response to global environmental problems. He is concerned that the UK should continue to take a constructive role in preparing for the 1992 UN Conference, on which a good start was made at UNEP's Governing Council. It will be essential to build up good will with developing countries and to convince them of the need for co-operation in achieving sustainable development. Vigilance will be needed to avoid the twin dangers of environmental dictatorship from the industrialised countries and confrontational demands from developing countries for more aid, debt forgiveness, a new international economic order and so on.

Energy Conservation Paper

After the Prime Minister's seminar Ministers concluded that it would not be appropriate to publish the individual papers, although as Dr Currie's paper has been deposited in Parliament we have no objection to its being in the public domain. The ideas of the paper are however being carried forward by the Department of Energy who have taken the lead in the IPCC in proposing to draw up a country case study.

I am copying this letter to Stephen Wall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Alex Allan (HM Treasury), Stephen Craine (Department of Education and Science) and Trevor Woolly (Cabinet Office)

Yours

CEJ Bush

KATE BUSH  
Private Secretary

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ENV AFFAIRS (And Row PTH)

