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cc DP

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CF: for Tues mtg folder per D 18/6



SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY  
THAMES HOUSE SOUTH  
MILLBANK LONDON SW1P 4QJ

01-211-6402

Prime Minister (2)  
To be aware - a good demonstration of the need for more co-ordination in this area!

David Barclay Esq  
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

15 June 1984

DWB  
15/6

Dear David

In the light of the Prime Minister's meeting on 19 June to consider Government policy on acid deposition, you will wish to know that my Secretary of State will be announcing, by way of written answer on Monday 18 June, publication of a report on "Acidity in the Environment", prepared by the Department's Energy Technology Support Unit (ETSU) at Harwell.

The report was commissioned from ETSU by the Department's Chief Scientist, in the light of the growing public interest in "acid rain" and as a necessary bringing together of the wide ranging sources of information and scientific hypotheses on the subject. The report examines the origins, transport, chemical transformation and deposition of acidity and its movement through the soil into waterways. It also examines the evidence linking observed environmental damage with acid deposition primarily from the UK view point, but examining also the influence on depositions in other countries of acidity originating in the UK.

As evidence of the Government's interest in, and concern about, the problem of acid deposition, my Secretary of State feels it appropriate that this report should be given as much publicity as possible. To that end, it has accordingly been arranged that in addition to a written answer (attached) and accompanying press release, a technical briefing will be given by ETSU Scientists on 18 June to specially invited representatives on the national and technical press.

I am copying this letter to Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), Brian Fall (FCO), John Graham (SO), John Ballard (DoE), Callum McCarthy (DTI), David Normington (DE), Ivor Llewelyn (MAFF), John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office), Dinah Nichols (DTp) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Your sincerely  
M F Reidy

M F REIDY  
Private Secretary

\* report in folder at back of file



Acid rain

R-2



PQ AND ANSWER: ETSU REPORT ON ACIDIFICATION

Q. To ask the Secretary of State for Energy what level of research into the causes of acid rain his Department is supporting.

A. UK emissions of sulphur dioxide have already fallen by over 30% in the last decade. However the Government recognises the need to continue our efforts to obtain a better understanding of the many scientific uncertainties involved in acid deposition. To that end my Department commissioned the Energy Technology Support Unit at Harwell to study the available scientific information about the origins, transport, chemical transformation and deposition of acidity in the environment. They have considered the evidence linking observed environmental damage to vegetation, aquatic life, structural materials and human health with the deposition of acidic sulphur and nitrogen species. Their report is being published today, and I have arranged for a copy to be placed in the Library of the House.

The report will provide a very useful addition to the sources of information on this very complex subject.

