

SUBJECT

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Master.



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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T182/84

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 October 1984

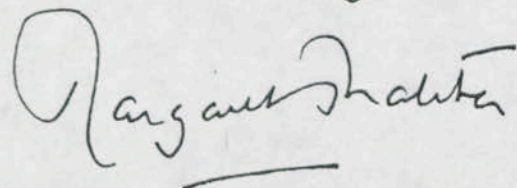
Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 2 October about air pollution.

I entirely agree with you that European countries need to work together to solve the long term problems of air pollution. The United Kingdom has a good record of concern about domestic air pollution and we have always acted, and acted effectively, to control problems when circumstances warranted. Our position on the long term international air pollution problems which we all now face is exactly the same; there are clearly strong grounds for concern and effective solutions have to be found. For my part, I am happy to pledge that the United Kingdom will continue to work to find those solutions both through domestic research and through work under the aegis of the United Nations Convention.

Meanwhile, I believe that current scientific evidence gives grounds for the view that reductions should be made not only in sulphur dioxide but also in nitrogen oxide emissions within a reasonable timescale. Having considered our industrial prospects and other factors, the United Kingdom therefore intends to make substantial reductions in these emissions by the turn of the century. We shall naturally stand ready to take further action in the light of changing scientific evidence.

Yours sincerely



His Excellency Mr Kare Willoch

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PI



2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434
My ref: J/PSO/17365/84

Your ref:

23 October 1984

Dear Charles

You sent this message from the Prime Minister of Norway to the Foreign Office on 11 October and it was subsequently agreed that this Department should provide a draft reply.

- / I now attach a draft reply together with a background note.
- / I am copying this letter and enclosure to Colin Budd at the Foreign Office.

Yours

Andrew Hurren

A C ALLBERRY
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq

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DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO MR KARE WILLOCH
PRIME MINISTER OF NORWAY

Thank you for your letter of 2 October about air pollution.

I ^{entirely} agree with you ~~entirely~~ that European countries need to work together to solve the long ^{term} problems of air pollution. The United Kingdom has a good record of concern about domestic air pollution and we have always acted, and acted effectively, to control problems when circumstances warranted. Our position on the long term international air pollution problems which we all now face is exactly the same; there are clearly strong grounds for concern and effective solutions have to be found. For my part, I am happy to pledge that the United Kingdom will continue to work to find those solutions both through domestic research and through work under the aegis of the United Nations Convention.

Meanwhile, I believe that current scientific evidence gives grounds for the view that reductions should be made not only in sulphur dioxide but also in nitrogen oxide emissions within a reasonable timescale. Having considered our industrial prospects and other factors, the United Kingdom therefore intends to make substantial reductions in these emissions by the turn of the century. We ~~will~~ ^{shall} naturally stand ready to take further action in the light of changing scientific evidence. ~~but I am sure that these precautionary steps are the appropriate response to the current situation until a way can be found to achieve the effective solutions which all European Governments seek.~~

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BACKGROUND

1. More than any other country, Norway is affected by the UK's sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions, receiving some 20% of its total deposition from us. During Mr. Waldegrave's recent visit there, he was impressed by the evidence of damage to freshwater ecosystems in the south of the country which scientists agree can be attributed to long range acid deposition. The attribution of cause and effect in the case of forest and other forms of damage is, however, less clear cut.
2. The Governments of Norway and the FRG are amongst the leaders of the (now) 20 countries which have committed themselves to reducing their total annual sulphur dioxide (SO₂) emissions or their transboundary fluxes by 30% by 1993 on the basis of annual emissions in 1980.
3. Mr. Willoch attempts in his letter to associate this commitment with the obligations laid down under the UN/ECE Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution. Although the 20 countries concerned are all parties to the Convention, the commitment does not spring from the terms of that instrument which provide for information exchange and cooperative research with a view to the development of policies to combat air pollution. Work under the Convention is only now embarking on cooperative research studies.
4. At a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister on 19 June, it was noted that the cost of reducing UK SO₂ emissions would be high for uncertain results since the connection between emissions and damage is imperfectly understood. It was also noted that evidence points to the possibility that emissions other than SO₂ may be more significant than SO₂ in the cause and effect chain. It was decided that the most appropriate response for the UK to make would be to seek to bring down total national emissions of both SO₂ and nitrogen oxide by 30% within a timescale which reflected current industrial circumstances and prospects; these considerations pointed to the end of the century as the most suitable date. It was agreed however, that circumstances do not warrant the UK binding itself to targets which would entail the retrofitting of expensive emission controls.

Env. Affairs Pt 2

Acid Rain

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

11 October 1984


MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF NORWAY

BF/ I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from the Prime Minister of Norway, and would be grateful for a draft reply by 19 October.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to John Ballard in the Department of the Environment.

(C.D. POWELL)

C.R. Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.





THE ROYAL NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT

THE PRIME MINISTER

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

Oslo, 2 October 1984

SERIAL No:

T 167C/84 cc MASTER
OFI

My dear Mrs. Thatcher,

In the talks between Chancellor Kohl and myself during his recent visit to Norway, considerable attention was devoted to the harmful effects of air pollution and the need for effective national measures to reduce the acidification of the environment. As a result of our deliberations we agreed on a "Joint declaration on the preservation of clean air", stressing the need for international solidarity in this field and the responsibility of all governments concerned for achieving prompt and concrete results. Enclosed please find a copy of this declaration.

I feel confident that your Government will participate in the efforts to implement the principles and obligations laid down in the United Nations Convention of 1979 on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution, which later have been made more specific in the commitments decided upon by a majority of the contracting parties to the Convention.

I feel convinced that improved international cooperation in this field will contribute in a significant way to enhance the possibility of reversing the present dangerous development.

*Yours sincerely
Kari Willoch*

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, FRS, MP
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW 1

Encl.

"Joint declaration on the preservation of clean air".

Both Heads of Government note with satisfaction that international efforts for the speedy reduction of air pollution in Europe have been given a substantial impetus through the international environment protection conference in Munich in June 1984.

They assume that the international clean air policy that was drawn up will be put into effect without delay within the framework of the UN-ECE Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution.

Both Heads of Government would draw attention to the fact that forests, watercourses, the soils, as well as irreplaceable artistic monuments are being damaged to an increasing extent. The great necessity of reducing air pollution through long-term preservation of the natural resources, calls for a determined and active effort on the part of all governments, both east and west, to give priority to this urgent task. They note that the preservation of clean air requires new technological innovations and re-adaptation, which will also provide stimuli for the national economy and the labour markets.

18 of the states parties to the Geneva Clean Air Convention have declared themselves to be committed or ready to reduce the annual emissions of sulphur dioxide and the transboundary fluxes by at least 30 percent by 1993 at the latest.

Both in Norway and in the Federal Republic of Germany as well as in other countries, action has been taken for more extensive reductions of air pollution.

International solidarity requires that, because of the transboundary fluxes of air pollution, all states

must, through effective national measures, do their share to contribute to the speediest possible reduction of the total pollution load. Not only does this apply to permanent installations, but also to other mobile sources of pollution.

Both Heads of Government expect that further international talks will be held on the subject to reach a comprehensive consensus on the present efforts to stop the dangerous development and thereby achieve lasting protection against the damaging effects of air pollution.

The Governments of Norway and the Federal Republic of Germany will, in close cooperation with each other and with other governments, adopt further measures and efforts to reach this goal.

Oslo, 6 September 1984

Kåre Willoch

Helmut Kohl