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From the Private Secretary

6 July, 1983

British Policy in Antarctica: Minerals

The Prime Minister has seen the memorandum of 4 July on the above point which has been circulated to OD by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Secretary of State for Energy.

For the purposes of the next negotiating round in Bonn the Prime Minister is content, subject to colleagues' views, that the United Kingdom's basic objectives should remain as set out in Annex B to the paper, that we should accept the New Zealand chairman's proposals in Annex C as the starting point for negotiations and that the delegation should be guided by the steering brief annexed to the paper.

The Prime Minister was content to endorse this approach on the basis that we are unlikely at the Bonn meeting to reach the point where the overall package will be ready for consideration by Ministers. But she considers that the question of our policy with regard to minerals in Antarctica is of such potential importance that an OD discussion should be arranged for the early autumn. I should be grateful if Richard Hatfield, to whom I am copying this letter, could have this in mind for OD's agenda after the holidays.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of OD and to the Secretaries of State for Education and Science, Environment and Energy.

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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