

PRIME MINISTER

You are to give an interview to BBC TV "Nature" tomorrow afternoon for transmission on Thursday evening about the environment and next week's international ozone conference. The interviewer will be Michael Buerk who is doing a series of programmes on the environment.

Although the interview is to be recorded it will be done as "live". However, any part which needs to be done again, can if this is necessary. The interview will last about 25 minutes. Details of the opening filmed sequences to your interview are at Annex I.

Michael Buerk will put the following questions to you:

**Relations with Europe** - Britain's relations with other European States over environmental issues are often seen as being poor. We have blocked several important EC directives on the Environment, and have been labelled the Dirty Man of Europe. Why?

**Ozone Conference** - What will emerge from the conference? How will the developed world persuade the developing world to accept the restrictions necessary to preserve the ozone layer?

**Nuclear Power** - The relationship between the Government's concern for the Environment and its support for nuclear power.

**The Government's Domestic Record** - funding for the Energy Efficiency Office and for scientific research into the Environment, reforms of the toxic waste disposal industry, public concern about loss of democratic control over the planning process, the standard of Britain's drinking water and of our bathing beaches, calls for the creation of an Environmental Protection Agency.

**Political Philosophy** - Control v deregulation. Is the Government's policy on the Environment incompatible with a major plank of its economic policy?

Briefing for the interview is at Annex II.

BBC will be bringing a make-up girl.

Content for interview to take place in the White Room?

T. J. P.

TERRY J PERKS

28 February 1989

I

A N N E X I

1. **Michael Buerk will say:**

Tonight, Nature looks at ten years of Toryism and the environment. On Sunday, Mrs Thatcher will be hosting a major conference on the ozone layer - her personal involvement is a sign of the importance she says her government now attaches to the issue. But is this a late conversion to the green cause, as her critics argue, and motivated more by concern for the ballot than the plant, or is environmentalism truly a natural part of Tory philosophy? In a major interview Mrs Thatcher will for the first time be outlining her commitment to the environment and answering criticism that ten years of Toryism has in fact left that environment dirty and more neglected than ever before. One of the first real signs of the new green government came in the Prime Minister's closing speech to last year's Tory Party Conference.

2. **You at the Party Conference:**

"The core of Tory philosophy and the case for protecting the environment are the same. No generation has a freehold on this earth. All we have is a life tenancy with a full repairing lease. And this government intends to meet the terms of that lease in full."

3. **Jonathan Porritt of Friends of the Earth:**

"I think Mrs Thatcher's so-called conversion to the green cause is a mixture of many different things. Partly as a scientist she began to read the evidence about the ozone layer and the greenhouse effect, and that clearly moved her. I think she's been under pressure domestically because of concerns about the green belt and waste issues in particular. But I think particularly she's been interested in the international implications of the environmental issues that we are now facing and my own belief is that Mrs Thatcher now sees herself as a stateswoman for the nineties and is out there to carve out a role for herself in that role as someone promoting maximum international cooperation on environmental issues. Now that's a new role for Mrs Thatcher and I think maybe a role in which she's casting an eye to Mr Gorbachev to see whether she can compete with him in a way she hasn't been able to compete until now."

4. **Michael Buerk:**

But here at home, her own Tories have been worrying about their environment - about development in the shires and a vision of the south of England turning into a huge housing estate.

## 5. Michael Heseltine:

"In the end, from the Weald of Kent to the Berkshire Downs, from the Chilterns to the Channel, you will build till you get to the sea. But I tell you it will never get that far - the political reaction will not prove containable."

## 6. Hugh Rossi:

"I think the whole legislative and administrative system for dealing with environmental matters is too patchwork. Local government does some things, other bodies do other things. I would like to see an integration - possibly the creation of an environmental protection commission something like the health and safety commission that will lay down policy, coordinate the activity. I would like to see too a strengthening of the inspectorate dealing with pollution matters so that there's more monitoring, more policing, and where people injure the environment they must be prepared to face the consequences in law."

## 7. Michael Buerk:

In the ten years of Mrs Thatcher's rule, Britain's record on environmental matter has been very poor, according to the Government's critics and especially its European critics. And the attitude of Mrs Thatcher's Environment Secretary Nicholas Ridley particularly angered environmentalists. He, and by implication the Prime Minister, were seen as more concerned with cleaning up the park than cleaning up the planet.

## 8. Clinton Davies:

"The government seemed to have an astonishing record for proved inertia. There would be a litany of reasons for not proceeding with steps to protect the environment. There would be breaches of the law, of community law, in relation to water, for example. I believe that when it comes to issues confronting us in relation to the North Sea which is a polluted rubbish tip really - questions like disposing of nuclear waste and other toxic wastes, Britain has hardly been in the front."

## 9. Michael Buerk:

In fact, we often seem to be dragged along at the rear. Europeans call Britain the dirty man of Europe.

We're still dumping sewage sludge at sea despite fears about the long-term effects - more than six million tonnes of it got flushed

away last year.

On land, our sewage works can't even keep to their own standards. Last year a fifth of them - over 1,200 - discharged more effluent than they were allowed to by law.

The water that comes out of our taps could do better as well. Two and a half million of us drink water that fails European purity standards.

Rubbish, the Government's critics say, is another black mark on the record. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution has only five inspectors to check 4,000 waste disposal sites all over the country.

10. **Clinton Davies:**

"If the Government was to deploy as many resources in dealing with threats to the environment and therefore the need to have more inspectors and much more monitoring as they do towards DHSS frauds, I think we would be looking at Mrs Thatcher's words with less scepticism. And I want to look at those words with less scepticism. I want to see the government reacting actively to translate what she had to say into reality."

11. **Hugh Rossi:**

"You must remember that the Prime Minister's training originally was as a scientist and she likes to have things proved to her before she acts. Once she is convinced, she does act and acts very effectively and I think that's what she's doing at the moment."

12. **Jonathan Porrit:**

"Huge international challenges of the ozone layer, the destruction of the world's tropical rainforests and the greenhouse effect and they will come bubbling through quite hotly now and I certainly think it would be wrong to keep talking about those things without coming up with concrete suggestions and initiatives to actually help address the problems."

13. **You at the Conservative Party Conference:**

"There's nothing new or unusual about the Tory commitment to protect the environment. The last thing we want is to leave environmental debts for our children to clear up - slag, grime,

acid rain and pollution. For too much of human history man assumed that whatever he did he could take the natural world for granted. Today we know that simply isn't true."

*Handwritten: Robert*  
*Handwritten: 60 minutes*  
*Handwritten: 35 minutes*

**ENVIRONMENT**

*Handwritten: known*

**ANNEX II**

1. The state of the environment, both national and international, is very much at the forefront of people's minds and the Government has demonstrated its concern to protect the environment consistently over the last 10 years. There is a very large programme of environmental measures already in hand.

2. In June of last year we agreed a new European Community Directive establishing significant new standards to deal with acid rain emissions, entailing a 60 per cent cut in 1980 levels sulphur emissions from power stations by 2003. This will involve significant further effort over and above the existing CEGB £1 billion investment programme.

3. In September 1987 we signed the Montreal Protocol which calls for a 50 per cent cut in chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by 2000 and other measures to protect the ozone layer. We are currently calling for an 85 per cent cut in CFCs world-wide to take effect as soon as possible.

**LEAD FREE PETROL**

4. We are actively encouraging the introduction and use of unleaded fuel. From October 1990 all new vehicles will have to be able to run on unleaded fuel.

5. There are now nearly 4,000 petrol stations (about 25%) selling unleaded petrol and the number is rising by about 60 a week. Tremendous strides have been made when you think that 6 months ago there were only 500 petrol stations selling unleaded petrol.

6. UK has complied with EC Directive on availability of unleaded petrol a year ahead of due date of 1 October 1989.

7. France, Italy and Ireland have proportionately fewer petrol stations selling unleaded petrol compared with UK.

**NORTH SEA POLLUTION**

8. We are implementing in full the major package of measures to protect the marine environment agreed at the 2nd North Sea Conference chaired by Nicholas Ridley in November 1987.

9. Following North Sea Conference UK has published Red List of dangerous substances in rivers and is acting now to restrict their discharge by 50% by 1995.

10. Riverborne pollutants main sources of problems in North Sea. UK contributes less than 20% of riverborne pollutants.
11. 80% of North Sea pollution from Continental rivers. Rhine/Meuse worst culprit (50%), together with Scheldt, Elbe and Weser.
12. FRG, Belgium and France burn waste at sea. UK burns very little at sea.

#### WATER

13. Protection of the water environment is also a task to which considerable resources are being devoted. Total investment by the water authorities, which has increased by over 40 per cent since 1980, now stands at an annual level of over £1 billion and is set to go on rising. Within this total £100 million is being spent each year on improving the quality of coastal bathing waters. Our recent record on cleaning up bathing waters is a good one. Two-thirds now meet EC standards, compared with only half in 1986.
14. 90% of rivers and canals in England and Wales of good or fair quality. 99% in Scotland.
15. Thames cleanest metropolitan estuary in Europe.
16. Only 75% of other EC rivers of good or fair quality.

#### WASTE DISPOSAL

17. UK disposes of all its own waste, does not export problem.
18. UK will end dumping of industrial waste which could damage marine life by 31 December 1989.
19. UK only EC country with centralised inspectorate enforcing standards on local waste disposal.
20. UK about to strengthen waste authorities' powers to regulate waste disposal.
21. UK supporting UNEP efforts to draw up global convention on transfrontier shipments.
22. The Government has undertaken a comprehensive review of legislation governing waste disposal, including toxic waste disposal. Our existing system is basically sound, but twelve years experience has shown how it can be further improved.

23. The key points announced on 29 June 1988 are:-
- (a) a duty of care on producers to ensure safe disposal;
  - (b) registration of waste carriers;
  - (c) tougher disposal site licensing conditions, including an obligation on the licensee to monitor and maintain the site until there is no risk of pollution.

We shall introduce legislation on these points within the lifetime of this Parliament.

24. Further proposals to improve the performance of waste disposal authorities were published for consultation on 24 January.

25. The Government does not object to imports of waste which come here from reputable sources for specialised chemical or physical treatment or incineration. We have good facilities, and it would be wrong to deny their use to other countries which cannot deal with the wastes safely. But we give short shrift to waste which has not been properly packaged or documented, as we did with the Karin B. We have taken the lead in Europe in bringing into force, in November 1988, tight regulations on the transfrontier shipment of hazardous waste.

26. FRG, Switzerland and Netherlands all export substantial quantities of chemical waste to Eastern Europe.

#### CLIMATIC CHANGES

27. The threat of global climate changes and its consequences give rise to perhaps the greatest environmental challenge of all and the UK is playing its full part in leading the international scientific effort to establish and adequate understanding of the problem.

28. UK wants to cut world-wide emissions of CFCs by at least 85% by 1999.

29. UK manufacturers will phase out non-essential use of CFCs in aerosols - which account for 60% of UK CFCs in use - by end 1989. ICI will manufacture chlorine-free substitute.



30. UK has called next week's international conference on ozone layer.

31. ~~France and Spain not willing to support call for 85% reduction by end of century.~~

32. 300 scientists in Overseas Development Natural Resources Institute provide sound scientific base for aid programme.

33. Within EC, only France has scientific base for aid programme comparable to UK.

34. Despite British coal being high in sulphur, UK will reduce:

- SO2 emission by 60% between 1980-2003.
- NOx emissions by 30% between 1980-1998.

35. Per capita NOx emissions higher than UK in Netherlands, FRG, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Canada and USA.

36. £1 billion programme to achieve reduction in SO2 emissions second largest in Europe (and growing).

#### HM INSPECTORATE OF POLLUTION (HMIP)

37. HMIP was formed on 1 April 1987 with a complement of 212 posts. 19 of these were new. There were initially 66 vacancies (including the 19 new posts). By November 1988 successful recruitment had reduced the number of vacancies to 18.

38. In December the Government announced an increase of 13 professional posts; we are about to start recruiting for them.

39. More recently an additional 4 administrative posts have been approved.

40. About 60% of the staff are professionals. Half of these are field inspectors; the rest develop and promulgate technical guidance.

#### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

41. About 600 delegates from 110 countries will be attending the conference from next Sunday until Tuesday.

42. Among the delegates there will be representatives from China, Russia, the USA and a number of Third World countries.

EXTRACTS FROM YOUR ROYAL SOCIETY SPEECH

43. "We have an extensive research programme at our meteorological office and we provide one of the world's four centres for the study of climatic change.

44. We must ensure that what we do is founded on good science to establish cause and effect.

45. In the past when we have identified forms of pollution, we have shown our capacity to act effectively. The great London Smogs are now only a nightmare of the past. We have cut airborne lead by 50 per cent.

46. Even though this kind of action may cost a lot, I believe it to be money well and necessarily spent because the health of the economy and the health of our environment are totally dependent upon each other.

47. The Government espouses the concept of sustainable economic development.

48. Stable prosperity can be achieved throughout the world provided the environment is nurtured and safeguarded.

49. Protecting this balance of nature is therefore one of the great challenges of the late Twentieth Century and one in which I am sure your advice will be repeatedly sought."

## SPENDING ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Our total spending on environmental research is running at about £160 million every year. We have increased the resources available to the Natural Environmental Research Council by £71 million in total over the next three years. We spend more per head on research to control environmental pollution than the USA, France or Italy (though less than Germany and the Netherlands).

On energy efficiency we put in a major effort (£26 million spending) during Energy Efficiency Year in 1986 to alert all households to ways of saving energy. Government spending is still running at between £10-15 million a year. The need now, rather than for general publicity measures, is for a more targeted approach particularly towards energy efficiency in industry, which has shown very good results. As far as domestic consumers are concerned the Electricity Bill will put a duty on the area electricity boards to encourage energy efficiency.

FACSIMILE

cc Mr Petko



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With the Compliments of the  
Parliamentary Clerk

URGENT

BY HAND

TO:

Dominic Morris

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FROM:

Deborah Lamb

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TEL: \_\_\_\_\_

Department of the Environment  
2 Marsham Street London SW1P 3EB  
Telephone 01-276 0930

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PAGE TO FOLLOW



2 MARSHAM STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3EB  
01-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

27 February

Dominic Morris  
PS/Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street

Dear Dominic,

PRIME MINISTER'S INTERVIEW FOR 'NATURE'

Apologies for my scrawl. You phoned earlier & requested briefing on a couple of points.

On Environmental Research, the attached tables show international comparisons for Government funding of R&D on control of environmental pollution. UK Government expenditure of £46m for 1986 was better on a per capita ~~basis~~ and % GNP basis than the USA & most other European countries except Germany and the Netherlands. It is important to note that this is only a proportion (about a third) of total Government Environmental Research expenditure, for which no ready international comparisons are available. The latest 1988/89 figures for the latter are given in the "Environment in Trust" leaflets which I have sent you today. I enclose a copy of the relevant page.

PTD.

I also attach a brief note on HMIA  
staff numbers, as requested.

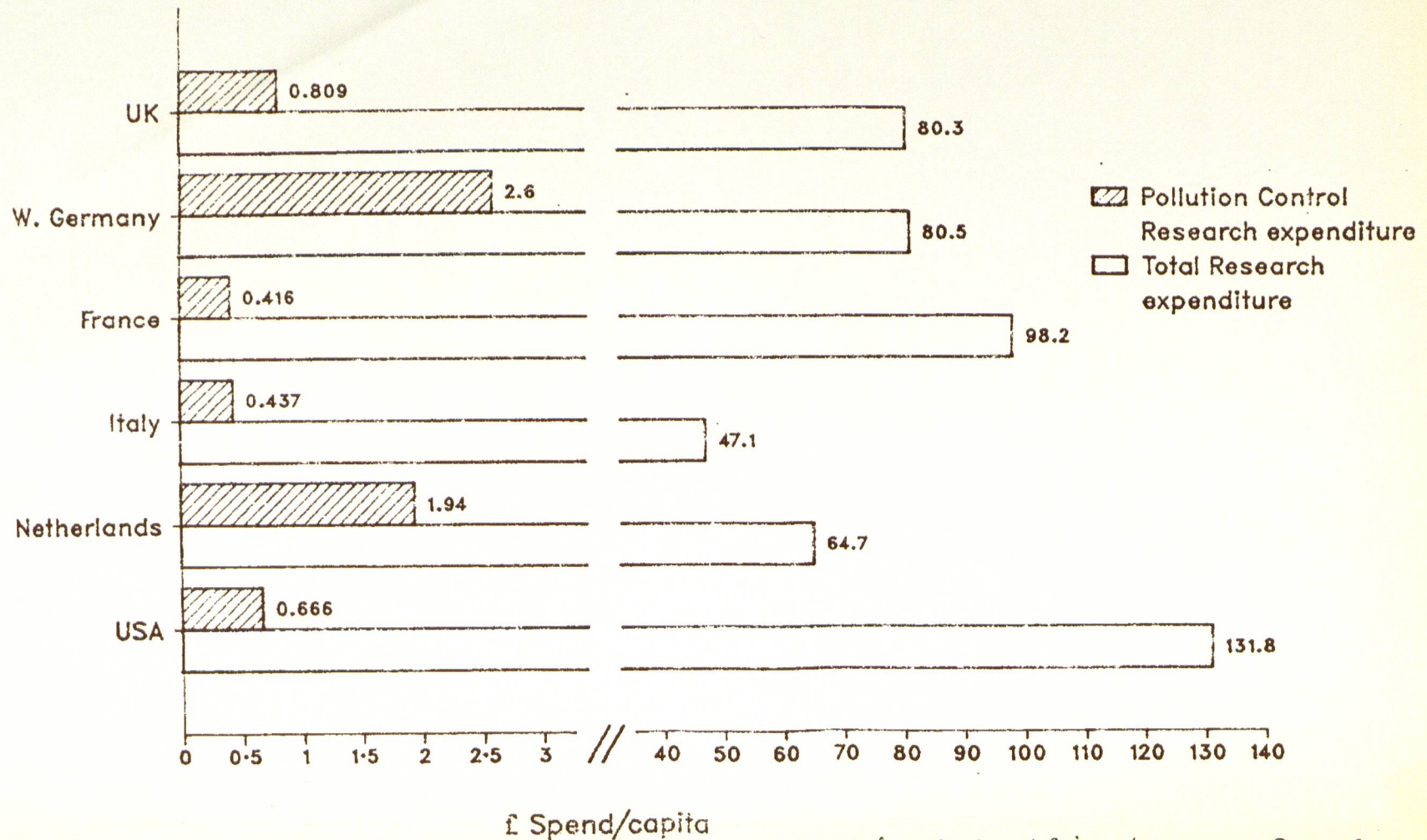
Please let me know if you require  
any other information.

Yours,

Deborah.

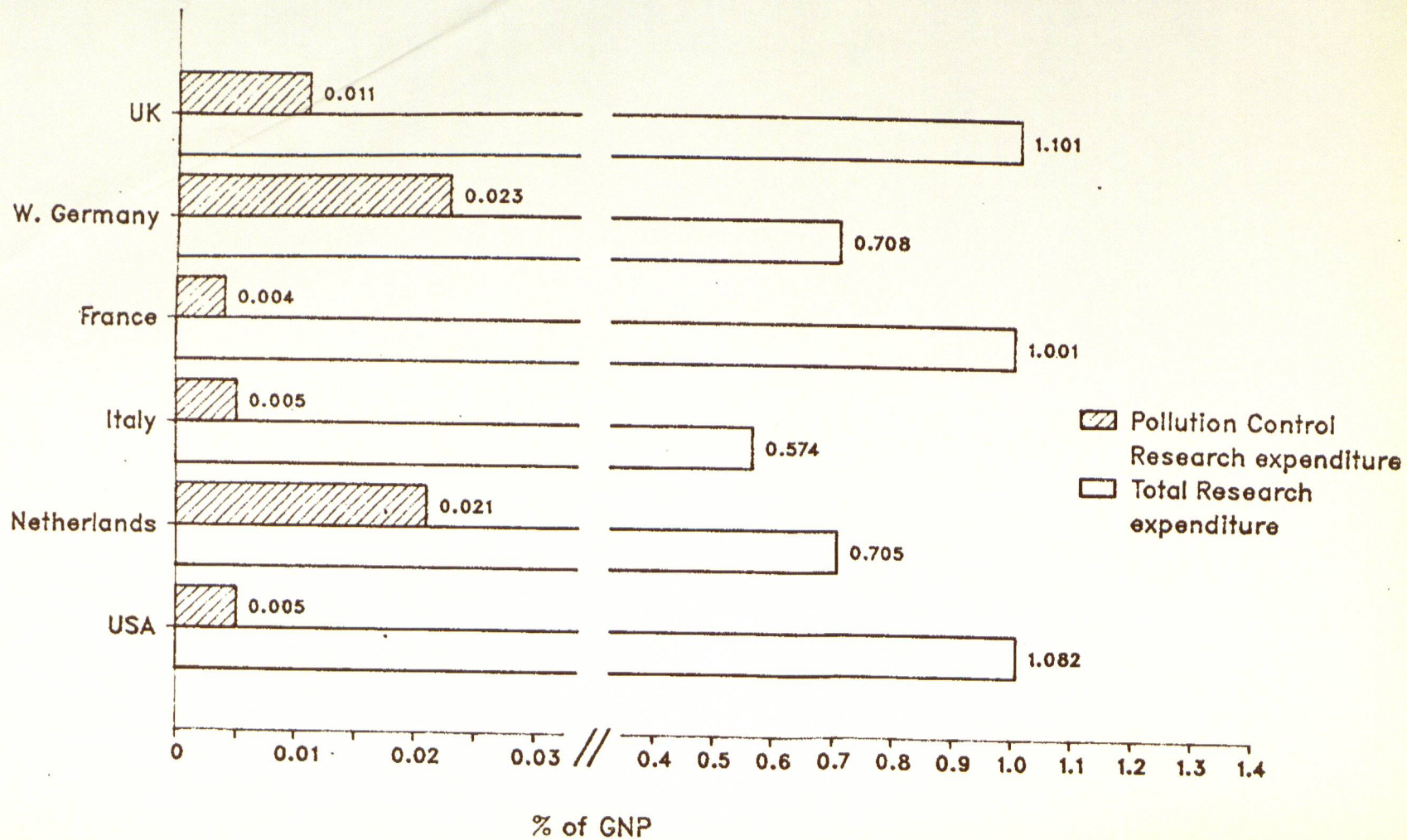
GOVERNMENT

## TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON RESEARCH AND ON POLLUTION CONTROL RESEARCH PER HEAD OF POPULATION FOR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND USA 1986



from UK Annual Review of Government Financed R&D 1988

GOVERNMENT  
**TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON RESEARCH AND ON  
 POLLUTION CONTROL RESEARCH AS A PERCENTAGE OF GNP  
 FOR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND USA 1986**



*from UK Annual Review of Government Funded R&D 1988*

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 PAGE 3



## GOVERNMENT R+D FUNDING IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE USA IN 1986

	£M			
	TOTAL R+D	DEFENCE R+D	CIVIL R+D	CONTROL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION R+D
UK	4562	2324	2238	46
GERMANY	4920	596	4324	159
FRANCE	5421	1755	3666	23
ITALY	2694	229	2465	25
NETHERLANDS	932	25	907	28
USA	30479	21159	9320	154

*From UK Annual Review of Government Funded R&D 1988*

## SCIENCE

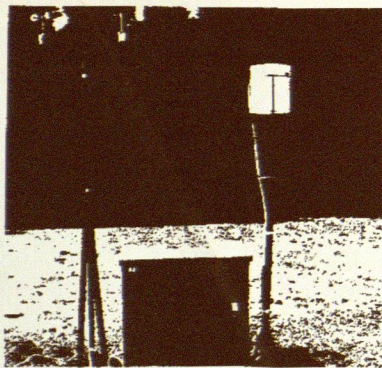
The Government believes that it is essential to have a proper understanding of the science of environmental issues before taking action. This is to ensure that the right decisions are taken. There is no benefit, least of all to the environment, if the wrong problems are addressed or the wrong solutions are adopted. The costs involved – which are in the end paid by the consumer – can be very high.

The Government therefore invests heavily in environmental research.

### EXAMPLES OF SCIENCE-BASED DECISIONS

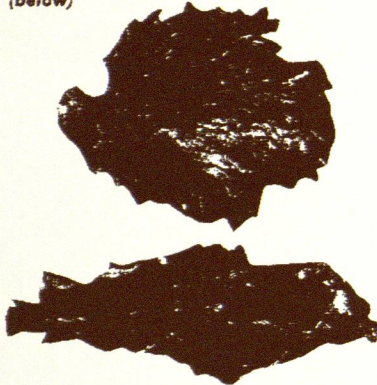
**Defining the problem** The UK has undertaken some of the largest studies on the effects of environmental lead on children. These have formed the basis for the policy to reduce exposure to lead from all environmental sources.

Directional sampler for lead in air



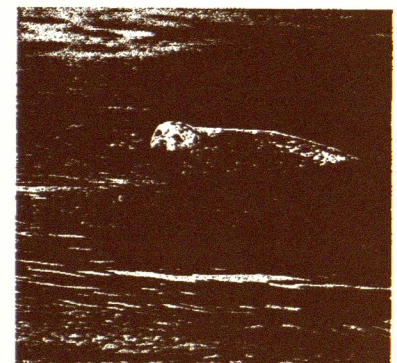
**Getting the right answer** Marine anti-fouling paints containing the biocide TBT were shown to be damaging to shellfish, even in the tiniest concentrations. The Government's solution was to ban from 1987 the use of TBT-based paints on small boats. Affected shellfish began to recover immediately after the ban.

Two oysters from the River Blackwater: before the TBT ban (above) and after (below)



**Avoiding the wrong answer** When the outbreak of viral disease began to affect seals in British waters in August 1988, there was much pressure to vaccinate seals in the wild with a canine distemper vaccine. Scientists' assessment showed that this would do the seals more harm than good.

The common seal



Expenditure on environmental research 1988/89	£m
Department of the Environment (for UK needs)	26.2
Department of Education and Science (Natural Environment Research Council)	90.9
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food	16.0
Department of Agriculture & Fisheries for Scotland	1.3
Department of the Environment (Northern Ireland)	0.7
Department of Agriculture (Northern Ireland)	2.5
Department of Energy	19.1
Nature Conservancy Council	4.5

Examples of environmental research 1988/89	£m
North Sea	7.0
Air pollution	6.0
Climate change	7.5
Renewable energy	16.2

From DOE's  
Environment in Trust  
Leaflet series  
March 1989

CONFIDENTIAL

HMIP

HM INSPECTORATE OF POLLUTION (HMIP)

HMIP was formed on 1 April 1987 with a complement of 212 posts. 19 of these were new. There were initially 66 vacancies (including the 19 new posts). By November 1988 successful recruitment had reduced the number of vacancies to 18.

In December the Government announced an increase of 13 professional posts; we are about to start recruiting for them.

More recently an additional 4 administrative posts have been approved.

About 60% of the staff are professionals. Half of these are field inspectors; the rest develop and promulgate technical guidance.

(2)

## GREENPEACE FIGURES FOR TRADE IN CFCs -REPORT IN GUARDIAN OF 1 MARCH

According to the "Guardian" of 1 March 1989, Greenpeace has stated that the UK is Europe's largest producer and exporter of CFCs. The figures quoted are 105 000 tonnes produced in 1988, of which 48 000 tonnes were exported to 117 countries (16 514 tonnes to other EC member states).

Although such figures have always been regarded as confidential, there being only two UK manufacturers, we have no reason to dispute their accuracy - they accord with our own assessment.

Under the Montreal Protocol the consumption of CFCs by each country is controlled - it makes no difference to the ozone layer where the CFCs that each country consumes are produced. The Protocol was designed to reflect existing production and trade patterns. If existing exporters ceased to export altogether, then their customers would have to build their own CFC plants to cover their remaining CFC needs. They would then have every incentive to cover the investment costs by continuing to use CFCs even when a full range of substitutes was available.

There are 4 possible markets for UK CFC production:

- a) The European Community: The Protocol controls the EC consumption of CFCs. No distinction is drawn between the different member states. Due to the voluntary action by user industries which the UK and other EC governments are encouraging, demand is falling much more quickly than required by the Protocol.
- b) Other developed countries: Consumption here is also constrained by the Protocol. Countries which do not produce CFCs themselves still need to import their remaining, reduced requirements.
- c) Developing Countries which have signed the Protocol: Demand here is constrained by the Protocol in the longer term but only to a limited extent in the short term. Developing countries should not be forced into building their own CFC plants by being unable to import CFCs for essential refrigeration etc.
- d) Countries which do not sign the Protocol: After a short period of grace to give all countries time to join the Protocol, from 1993 any country which exports to a country which is not a Protocol Party will have to reduce its own CFC consumption by a corresponding amount, in addition to its own obligations under the Protocol.

This is a sophisticated international system of controlling CFCs. It is designed to encourage all countries to join the Protocol, and to eliminate loopholes leading to increased production and consumption. Unilateral action would be of little benefit to the ozone layer, and, by discouraging developing countries from joining the Protocol, could be counter-productive. This is why UK efforts are concentrated on encouraging all countries to join the Protocol (eg "Saving the Ozone Layer" Conference, 5-7 March) and on strengthening the Protocol itself, so that world-wide emissions of CFCs are cut by at least 85% by the turn of the century.

Introductory section

An Environmental Protection Agency?

*me*

No. Because

- environmental questions cannot be dissociated from other Governmental concerns;
- environment is a political subject, and any agency should be accountable to Ministers;
- the interests of the agency would be very wide-ranging and would comprise a complex mixture of policy, advisory and executive functions

An environmental White Paper

No. White Papers are useful for setting out the Government's legislative intentions. We have made our legislative intentions clear.

## THE GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

### Energy

Unveiling in June 1988 a limited strategy for developing some renewable energy sources

Work on renewable forms long ante-dated 1988. Announcement concerned concentration on most promising renewable forms. ~~£150m~~ DE Programme of research into renewable sources of energy.

1975-89      £135m - total (£140m at current prices)  
spend £50m ~~over~~ next 3 years

Pollution control

Establishing HMIP nearly eleven years after the RCEP recommended we did so

Publishing a consultation document on IPC

The UK's integrated approach to pollution control makes us the first major European nation to have adopted such an approach. We are also rather in advance of the EC in developing our ideas.

Cuts in NERC's budget

Untrue. There has been no overall squeeze in its funding. Will rise from plateau of £71.5m in 1985/86 and 86/87 to £77m in 1988/89. Recent increase of £23m in NERC's share of 1989/90 science budget.

## "DIRTY PRACTICE, DIRTY GOVERNMENT"

### Agriculture, forestry and pesticides

#### Lack of Government funding for organic farming

Organic farmers get normal support measures; ADAS has equipped itself specially to advise on organic farming matters. Supporting work of Board of UK Register of Organic Food Standards (UKROFS).

#### Scrapping differential in favour of broadleaf woodland planting and continuing to plant conifers in the Flow country

The first allegation is untrue. Interested parties are discussing which parts of the Flow country should be preserved, so that those other areas which are suitable for conifer planting can be identified.

#### Refusing to agree NCC's nomination of the Flow country for WHC

Scottish Office were not approached by NCC with such a proposal.

#### Rejecting most of recommendations in NCC's report 'Nature Conservation and Afforestation in Britain'.

This was an important document in the whole debate. But it only expressed one view and there were others (eg the Forestry Commission's) of which Government had to take account.

#### Missing deadlines to enforce key sections of 1986 Pesticides Regulations and control the use of regulated pesticides

These deadlines have not been seriously missed. To date and HSE and the MAFF and DAFS have taken action to enforce statutory requirements. Local authorities have not so far taken up their enforcement powers; but the new Pesticides (Fees & Enforcement) Bill will make it easier to do so. Second Reading is on 1 March (and hence Mr Ryder's absence).



## COUNTRYSIDE AND PLANNING

### Blocking EC's draft Habitats Directive

- although principle received overwhelming support at EC Council, the Commission's proposals were unacceptable to all member states - overbureaucratic and too intrusive. Widespread support given to UK suggestion that actions should be based on implementing obligations under existing international conventions;

### Designating 40 out of 120 wetland sites under Ramsar

### Designating a quarter of the 220 birds sites proposed by the NCC

- all specially protected areas and Ramsar sites must first be notified as SSSIs, as it is this status that provides protection from damaging operations under UK law. The priority so far has therefore been to complete the SSSI notification programme;

### Refusing to ensure protection of SSSIs

- Since 1984 no SSSI protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 has been lost, and the overall level of damage has been significantly reduced;

### Favouring development proposals in green field sites by weakening planning regulations

- Don't accept planning regulations weakened; streamlined and made more effective while maintaining a balance between the preservation of the environment and the need for development.

## Energy

Refusal of Government to accept "least cost planning" under the Electricity Privatisation Bill.

Legislation repeats general amenity obligation of Electricity Act 1957. Non-fossil fuel obligation covers renewable as well as nuclear forms of energy.

## Response to Chernobyl

Monitoring procedure reviewed post-Chernobyl and the result is a new national response plan for dealing with future overseas accidents was set up. The plan includes a national radiation monitoring network (RIMNET); phase 1 is now operational.

## Four major climbdowns?

Government believes safe disposal options for radioactive waste exist, and have asked UK Nirex to identify a site for deep disposal of all low level and intermediate level waste. Decision to abandon investigations of shallow land burial in May 1987 was taken on economic grounds. Decision to abandon investigations into possible high level waste disposal sites deep underground was justified on the grounds that sufficient evidence on the feasibility of the deep disposal concept was available from overseas. Government policy is that such waste should be stored for 50 years before disposal.

## Cutting wave power and active solar energy programmes

Concentrating on most promising technologies. Resources concentrated on tidal, wind and passive solar designs where likely gains much greater.

## Marine

### 'FAILING TO CLEAN UP BRITAIN'S MANY SEVERELY POLLUTED RIVER ESTUARIES AND BASINS, INCLUDING THE MERSEY, WHICH IS PROBABLY THE MOST POLLUTED IN WESTERN EUROPE'

- Despite UK's long coastline UK contributes only 20% of the riverborne contaminants into North Sea.
- Major improvements to all the major East Coast rivers. The Tyne now an important salmon river and salmon again in Forth, Humber, Tees and Thames.
- Government embarked on £4 billion campaign to clean up Mersey basin - objective to upgrade whole system to at least Class 2 by 2010.
- 'Red list' controls will reduce dangerous inputs to river by 50%

### "Continuing to dump over 7 million tons of sewage sludge into North Sea"

- Sewage sludge does little or no harm. It is effluent left after sewage treatment and is a mild fertiliser. Normally it is spread on farmland but this is not possible for some of the major conurbations.
- It is only authorised after checks to ensure that there are no better land-based alternative means of disposal. The dumping grounds are stringently monitored by MAFF.

## OVERSEAS AID & TROPICAL RAIN FORESTS

### FUNDING ITTO

UK believes priorities and programmes of the ITTO should be formulated before the UK decides to provide additional funding. This will ensure that the ITTO does not duplicate work by other organisations. DTI has the lead in this area.

### DENMARK

UK sided with EC Commission as the Danish system was viewed as a barrier to trade thus contravening the Treaty of Rome. Also against assurances given to the UK by the EC Commission in 1985 when the Beverage Containers Directive was adopted. This stated there would be no discrimination between different types of container package or system

### REFUSAL TO IMPLEMENT EC BEVERAGES CONTAINERS DIRECTIVE

UK felt legislation to implement EC Directive was unnecessary as voluntary agreements would suffice. A programme agreed with local government & 28 Trade & Industry Assoc. was accepted by the EC Commission

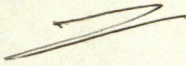
### RESOURCE TAX

Oppose the introduction of a resource tax on raw materials as:-

- effects would be inflationary
- burden on industry through higher costs which would be met by consumers
- additional administrative burdens
- lead to market distortions between differing materials

"Admitting in February 1989 that 125 of the 390 officially designated bathing beaches breached the EEC Directive, primarily because of sewage effluent levels"

The Government has authorised a programme costing £70 million annually to up-grade sea-outfalls. Steady progress has been achieved and all bathing beaches will comply with EC requirements by 1995.



## TRANSPORT

\* While claiming credit for not allowing in 40 tonne lorries, the D of Transport has consistently refused to implement measures designed to limit lorry weights and allows overloading by up to 10%.

Maximum lorry tonnage in this country is 38 tonnes. DoT do prosecute if weight is 5% over the limit and in appropriate cases will prosecute if the vehicle is overweight by less than 5%. To combat overloading, between 1988/87 and 88/89, the number of vehicles weighed doubled, and in 1989/90 the DoT expect to weigh 115,000 vehicles.

There is also a pilot project at 5 main ports. Sensors are used which automatically indicate whether an incoming vehicle is overweight. If the pilot is successful, this scheme will be extended.

\* Refusing to reclaim more than £100 million a year in unpaid Vehicle Excise License duty.

In 1987/88 we followed up more than 900,000 offence reports; took 183,000 prosecutions; settled 173,000 cases out of court; recovered £23.6 million, which was more than twice what was recovered 5 years ago.

\* Allowing some 110 SSSIs to be damaged, destroyed and threatened by road building schemes.

In planning or improving a trunk road, the DoT does all it can to avoid impinging on SSSIs. Where this is unavoidable, the Department holds extensive consultations with the Nature Conservancy Council, local environment groups and other interested bodies in an effort to ensure that the impact on the sensitive area is lessened as far as possible and, where necessary, to explore with them possibilities for removal and resiting of the species affected.

\* Allowing the Okehampton Bypass to be built through Dartmoor National Park.

In National Parks the Government is committed to ensuring that no new trunk road will be constructed or existing road upgraded unless there is a compelling need which cannot be met by any reasonable alternative means.

In the case of the Okehampton Bypass, the preferred southern route which passes along the northern edge of Dartmoor was considered to be the most environmentally acceptable solution. The proposal was subject to a long public inquiry before an independent Inspector who found in favour of this route.

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## AIR POLLUTION

### Shelving proposed Clean Air Bill in 1987

- no commitment for a Bill in 1987; we have promised to legislate at the earliest opportunity to update the air pollution control system, as set out in a 1986 consultation paper. This remains the intention. Air pollution control proposals now incorporated in proposals for integrated pollution control;

### Weakening European limits to control vehicle emissions, and refusing to introduce US standards to control NOx and hydrocarbons

- UK joined other EC member states in agreeing new vehicle emission standards which will mean a considerable reduction in emissions. For large cars the new standards are equivalent to US standards. For cars below 21 the new standards will lead to a 50% reduction in NOx and over 75% in gaseous hydrocarbons whilst allowing the development of new and fuel efficient techniques such as lean burn engines. Lean burn cars are expected to emit 10% less carbon dioxide;

### Mandatory labelling and recycling schemes for CFCs

- believe that labelling best left to the operation of the market, rather than rigid mandatory controls. We welcome the decision last year by the British Aerosol Manufacturers' Association to label products that do not contain CFCs, and we are encouraging other sectors of the market to follow suit. Ways of increasing recycling are being actively pursued in commercial refrigeration, flexible foam blowing, the electronics industry and fire fighting. The government is discussing the situation in domestic refrigeration with industry to develop advice;

### Blocking agreement on Large Plants Directive for 5 years



- UK wanted agreement on the Directive but , like a number of other member states, was not able to agree to impracticable proposals. Our commitment to solving the acid rain problem is demonstrated by its authorisation of a £1b clean-up programme for Britain's largest power stations well before the Directive was agreed;

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Delayed implementation of lead and NOx and Air Pollution Framework Directives

- took all steps necessary to comply with air quality standards for lead and NOx by due dates. Standards are being met throughout the UK except for a small area in Walsall, where a derogation from the lead limit has been granted until Dec 1989. Urgent action is being taken to reduce lead emissions. Intend to lay regulations giving statutory force to the standards within days. The system of control required by the Framework Directive is in line with the existing UK system. Will shortly lay regulations to bring the UK system fully into line with the Directive.

## HAZARDOUS WASTES

Consistently underfunded HMIP and refused to establish it on a statutory basis.

The Government have already announced the addition of 13 extra posts. There has been more success too in filling existing vacancies. The announcements I have made today will guarantee a statutory role for HMIP.

Taking over six and a half years to respond to the House of Lords Select Committee Report

Government response issued in 1985. The intervening period was spent in gaining agreement between local government, central government and industry on a way forward.

Rejecting the RCEP report in 1985 on waste management

The main recommendations are closely reflected in current Government legislative proposals.

Only implementing after threats of EC legal action two directives on the transfrontier shipments of hazardous waste

We were one of the first countries to implement the directives.

Twice issuing and then shelving waste management consultation papers during the 1980s, not bringing forward either regulations or new legislation for several years.

There has been careful and progressive development of legislative proposals which now meet with the approval of all interested parties. A basic consultation document in September 1986 led to conclusions on a comprehensive package announced progressively on 29 June, 23 November and 24 January.

## Water Pollution

### "Late adoption of nitrate limits in EC drinking water directive: failure to establish water protection zones"

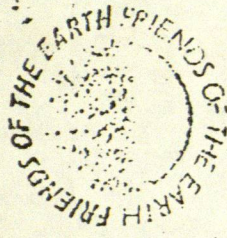
- Water undertakers have now set in train programmes to achieve compliance with the EC nitrate standard (final compliance expected in 1995). The Water Bill, now before Parliament, contains proposals to make the designation of water protection zones more effective; compensation will also be provided to farmers.

### "Advice to water undertakers not to report breaches of EC pesticide levels"

- Not true. (HMG's medical advisers consider that current pesticide levels in water come nowhere near cause for concern.)

### "Relaxation of sewage treatment works discharge consents"

- Consent conditions have been varied in recent years: some consents have been relaxed, some tightened, in the light of changing circumstances. We have now announced programme of expenditure of some £1 billion over 4 years to bring sewage treatment works into compliance with consents.



FOR THE  
ATTENTION  
OF  
ALEX  
GRAILE

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# PRESS RELEASE

\*\*\*URGENT\*\*\*URGENT\*\*\*URGENT\*\*\*URGENT\*\*\*URGENT\*\*\*URGENT\*\*\*  
Embargoed until 12 noon Tuesday 28 February 1989.

## TEN YEARS OF IGNORING THE ENVIRONMENT The Government's Track Record Exposed

Today, Tuesday 28 February, Friends of the Earth published a major 80-page critique of the Government's environmental track record (enclosed and see Notes to Editors).

At a press conference held at the International Press Centre, 76 Shoe Lane, London EC4, the authors of the report, Charles Secrett (Campaigns Director) and Jonathon Porritt (Executive Director) detailed the failure of the Government to protect the environment over its 10 years in office. Those few initiatives that it has taken have generally resulted from the European Commission insistence that Britain upholds European environmental protection laws and growing public concern over increasing air and water pollution, the threats posed by Britain's archaic and poorly regulated waste trade, the continued disruption of important wildlife habitats, and the collapse of the country metropolitan transport systems.

Details of the impacts government policies are having on the environment in Britain are included at the beginning of each chapter.

Jonathon Porritt stated;

"While Friends of the Earth warmly welcome Mrs Thatcher's recent commitment to come to terms with environmental issues, we challenge her to make good her claims that the Conservatives are not merely friends of the Earth - we are its guardians and trustees for generations to come.

It is essential that the Government put...

"If the Government's professed commitment to the environment is to mean anything, we must have strong, strictly enforced environmental policies. Publishing pretty leaflets on the environment, as the Department of the Environment tends to do, is no substitute for cogent legislation that addresses the problems.

"Friends of the Earth therefore call on the Government to establish a true Ministry for the Environment headed by a Secretary of State, committed to environmental protection. We also need an effective monitoring and enforcement agency, like the Environmental Protection Agency in the US.

"Finally, we urge the Government to publish a White Paper on the Environment and Conservation so that other government departments can clearly understand what they will be expected to do to protect and conserve the quality of life."

#### THE GOVERNMENT'S RECORD ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The 'achievements' listed below have usually resulted from pressure to comply with European law or sustained lobbying by environmental groups like FOE. Many of those listed below have come in the last few months.

##### Wildlife

\* pushing for a European Directive banning the sale of goods containing whale products (1980).

##### Agriculture, Forestry and Pesticides

\* introducing Environmentally Sensitive Areas to try and balance food production and conservation (page 10), although only 19 out of the 46 originally proposed by the N.C.C. have been designated.

\* introducing a modest duty on agriculture ministers to balance the needs of conservation with agriculture in The Agriculture Act 1986 (page 11).

\* removing commercial woodlands from the scope of income and corporation tax in 1988 (page 12).

\* passing the limited Food and Environment Protection Act (1985) and weak Control of Pesticides Regulations in 1986.

##### Countryside and Planning

\* passing the Wildlife and Countryside Act in 1981, combining a voluntary approach and compensation payments to protect nationally important wildlife sites (page 17)

Energy

\* unveiling in June 1988 a limited strategy for developing some renewable energy sources (page 20).

Marine

\* hosting the North Sea Conference in November 1987 (page 31).

\* agreeing to designate Marine Nature Reserves under the W/C Act after sustained lobbying. Only one reserve has been created since 1981.

Overseas Aid and Tropical Rainforests

\* the ODA established a Natural Resources and Environment Department in 1986 (page 37).

\* supporting in principal the Tropical Forest Action Plan and the International Tropical Timber Organisation (page 39).

\* providing a £1 million matching grant for tropical forest conservation work with WWF in February 1988 (page 40).

Recycling

\* providing voluntary groups with some financial backing for local recycling schemes (page 43).

Transport

\* rejecting the Department of Transport's preferred route for the M40 Oxford-Birmingham extension through Otmoor and Burnwood Forests SSSI complex.

Pollution Control

\* establishing Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution (nearly 11 years after the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution recommended doing so - page 52).

\* publishing a consultation paper on Integrated Pollution Control in July 1988 (page 52).

Air Pollution

\* in 1988, the Government dropped its long-standing objections to an EEC Directive to curb Sulphur Dioxide and Nitrogen Oxide emissions from large combustion plants, and is newly promoting a cut back of at least 85% in Chlorofluorocarbon emissions (page 54). (These 3 decisions came after many years of sustained pressure from other governments and FOE).

\* reducing the duty on unleaded petrol in 1987 and

\* after repeatedly ignoring parliamentary recommendations on the urgent need for reform of waste control legislation and practices, the DoE finally issued regulations in May 1988 to extend the scope of waste disposal licensing and collection systems (page 54).

\* finally issuing proposals in February 1989 to separate the regulatory and operational functions of the waste disposal authorities in England and Wales (page 64).

Water Pollution

\* belatedly announcing in November 1988 a £1 billion package to control sewage discharges in the run up to privatisation (page 67).

\* issuing in July 1988 a consultation paper on controlling discharges of the most dangerous substances (the Red List), following European Community pressure.

\* belatedly offering £50 million in 1988 to control farm pollution over 3 years.

Environmental Research

\* in February 1988, surprisingly announcing an increase of £27 million for key marine and climatic research programmes, following severe cuts in the National Environment Research Council's programmes (page 76).

-ENDS-

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NOTES TO EDITORS'DIRTY PRACTICE, DIRTY GOVERNMENT' (1979-1989)

The following are some of the main sins of commission and omission which characterise the Government's track record on environmental protection (or rather the lack of it) over the past 10 years. These present far more compelling picture of the low priority the Government has given to the environment and its meagre achievements:

Agriculture, Forestry and Pesticides

- \* refusing to support or develop organic farming, despite consumer demand and the fact that 44% of Britain's arable land is at risk from soil erosion from intensive, chemically oriented farming (page 10).
- \* scrapping the differential in favour of pure broad-leaved woodland planting schemes and continuing to permit conifer planting in the Flow Country, an area of global significance (page 12).
- \* refusing to list the Flow Country under the World Heritage Convention despite recommendation of the NCC (page 12).
- \* rejecting most of the key recommendations contained in the NCC's report, 'Nature Conservation and Afforestation in Britain' in October 1987, which would ensure new forest developments protected wildlife sites (page 12).
- \* repeatedly missing deadlines to enforce key provisions of the 1986 Pesticide Regulations and control the use of regulated pesticides (page 14).

Countryside and Planning

- \* continuing to block the European Commission's draft Habitats Directive, which would afford greater protection for threatened species and habitats in Britain (page 16).
- \* designating only 40 of the 120 internationally important wetland sites recommended by the NCC under the Ramsar Convention (page 16).
- \* designating only a quarter of the 220 sites proposed by the NCC under the 1979 Birds Directive (page 16).
- \* refusing to ensure the protection of SSSIs from damaging developments (page 17).
- \* repeatedly attempting to favour development proposals in green field sites by weakening planning regulations (page 18).

Energy



\* refusing to accept the imperative of least cost planning under the Electricity Privatisation Bill.

\* failing to provide comprehensive radiation monitoring, responding to the Chernobyl disaster with confusion, poor communications with the public and between government departments, delay and secrecy, and underestimating by 40 times the levels of radioactive contamination (page 24).

\* promoting an incoherent radioactive waste management policy with 4 major climb downs in recent years from previously stated positions (page 25).

\* cutting the potentially successful wave power and active solar energy programmes.

#### Marine

\* failing to clean up Britain's many severely polluted river estuaries and basins, including the Mersey, which is probably the most polluted in western Europe (page 31).

\* continuing to dump over 7 million tonnes of sewage sludge into the North Sea.

\* continuing arguments between the DoE and MAFF about whether the polluter pays principle should be applied for farmers to pay for the costs of controlling nitrate in drinking water (page 38).

\* abandoning early proposal for a comprehensive White Paper on the Water Environment (page 33).

\* admitting in February 1989 that 125 of the 108 officially recognised bathing beaches breached the EEC Directive, primarily because of sewage effluent levels.

#### Overseas Aid and Tropical Rainforests

\* cutting Britain's overseas aid budget successive years since 1979; in 1987, British aid as a proportion of GNP fell to a new low of 0.28%.

\* taking away ministerial status from the Minister of Overseas Development in 1979 and severely cutting staffing levels at the internationally renowned Land Resources Development Centre and the Tropical Development and Research Unit between the early 80s and 1985 (page 37).

\* continue to support multilateral development bank projects like hydroelectric dams, which destroy huge areas of rainforest (although there are welcome signs this policy may be changing) (page 40).

\* not yet supporting the project fund of the International Tropical Timber Organisation, despite welcoming its sustainable management and conservation objectives.

- \* joining with the Commission in taking Denmark to the European Court of Justice, for requiring all bottled drinks and mineral waters to be marketed in returnable bottles, with a deposit and collection system, and for banning metal cans (page 42).
- \* refusing to introduce legislation or regulation under the EEC Directive on beverage containers to ensure recycling.
- \* resisting the introduction of a resource tax on certain raw materials (like paper pulp and aluminium) to make reclamation more attractive economically (page 44).

#### Transport

- \* allowing some 110 SSSIs to be damaged, destroyed and threatened by road building schemes (page 45).
- \* increasing spending on national roads by 30% in real terms between 1979 and 1985, and subsequently running down public sector transport (page 45).
- \* banning its transport planners from using a computer model which demonstrated that the Government's policy in London of eliminating rail subsidies, halving subsidies to bus passengers and investing in substantial road building schemes was the worst option of all for solving the capital's transport problems.
- \* consistently under-funding British Rail and London Regional Transport (page 47/48).
- \* while claiming credit for not allowing in 40 years lorries, the Department of Transport has consistently refused to implement measures designed to limit lorry weights and allow overloading, by up to 10% (page 49).
- \* allowing the Oakhampton Bypass to be built through Dartmoor National Park (page 50).
- \* refusing to reclaim more than £100 million a year in unpaid Vehicle Excise License duty (page 50).

#### Air Pollution

- \* shelving its proposed Clean Air Bill to reform Britain's archaic air pollution laws in 1987, nearly 9 years after the RCEP recommended reform.
- \* with France and Italy, weakening European limits to control polluting vehicle emissions (page 55), and refusing to introduce stringent US standards to control NOx and hydrocarbons.

mandatory labelling and recycling schemes for products containing CFCs.

\* blocking agreement on various proposals under the EEC's large plants Directive to control sulphur dioxide emissions for almost 5 years (page 58).

\* failing to meet the implementation deadlines for EEC Directives on Air Quality Standards for lead and nitrogen dioxide, and the Framework Directive on air pollution from industrial plants.

#### Hazardous Wastes

\* consistently underfunding and underresourcing Her Majesty's Inspectorate on Pollution, and so far refusing to establish it on a statutory basis.

\* taking over 6 and a half years to formally respond to the 1981 House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology inquiry into hazardous waste disposal, and then rejecting widely supported proposals to control Britain's archaic and poorly regulated hazardous waste trade.

\* rejecting out of hand the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's 1985 report on waste management by accepting less than a fifth of its 68 recommendations and ignoring dozens of other proposals (page 65).

\* after threat of legal action by the European Commission, finally implementing two Directives on the transfrontier shipments of hazardous wastes in September 1988 - the first was 3 years late and the second nearly 2 years late (page 66).

\* twice issuing, and then shelving, waste management consultation papers during the 1980s, not bringing forward either regulations or new legislation for several years.

\* refusing to support a proposal at the June 1988 EC Environment Ministers Council to ban waste shipments from the EEC to Third World countries.

#### Water Pollution

\* after threat of legal action by the European Commission, the Government finally stopped breaking the law, and adopted the Drinking Water Directive nitrate limits.

\* relaxing the discharge consents for at least 1000 of the 6600 main sewage treatment plants in England and Wales over the past 3 years (page 74).

\* not adhering to European limits for lead concentrations in

\* not yet establishing water protection zones, some 18 months after the system of control for nitrate pollution was first proposed (page 72).