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From the Private Secretary

3 May 1989

ENVIRONMENT

Thank you for your letter of 28 April about the possible international initiatives on the environment that were discussed at the Prime Minister's meeting on 19 April.

The Prime Minister is a bit hesitant about our taking the lead in promoting the idea of a Convention on Climate Change, she is conscious of John Mason's warning at the Seminar that there are now so many meetings that scientists no longer have the time to do the science. I have said to her that it seems to me that the proposal in your letter is basically a diplomatic/political exercise, creating a framework for future international action, and would not greatly involve scientists, at least in the early stages. One purpose would be to pre-empt the interventionist ideas discussed at the Hague Conference, by being first in the field with a well worked out proposal. The Prime Minister has now said that she is ready to see us promote the idea of a Convention on this basis. She does not, however, wish us to attend the 9/10 May Paris meeting to follow up the Hague Conference. As you know, Mr. Lubbers did not raise this matter with her and she continues to take the view that we should stand clear of this exercise.

I am copying this letter to Roger Bright (Department of the Environment).

C. D. POWELL

R.N. Peirce, Esq.
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