

E.R.  
PRIME MINISTER

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The Secretary of State has minuted you (Flag A) proposing:

- that he should announce at the Party Conference the publication of a white paper on the environment in the autumn of 1990;
- that he should also announce an intention to launch next year a periodic "State of the Environment" report.

He also mentions in passing the follow up to the Pearce report and the need to update the Government's environmental leaflets.

I also attach a minute from Sir Robin Butler (Flag B) suggesting:

- that you should stress that the White Paper should have a strong scientific base, be eminently readable and accompanied by updated versions of the environmental leaflets;
- that the Secretary of State should circulate a paper setting out the policy in more detail before further work is set in hand;
- that the Secretary of State would like there to be machinery to ensure there is a real drive in Departments to contribute to new thinking; and proposing the membership of a Ministerial group if you thought that appropriate.

Mr Baker has minuted you (Flag C) giving strong support to a White Paper but expressing doubts about a regular State of the Environment report, lest it become a hostage to fortune. He

would prefer the White Paper itself to be such a report.

Carolyn Sinclair also advises (Flag D) caution on the State of the Environment report. She suggests that a public commitment should not be given until it is clearer what would be involved. But she doubts whether EC pressures for the annual publication of statistics would in any case be easy to resist. Carolyn also helpfully sounds a note of caution about the follow-up to the Pearce Report, which raises complex issues which need to be explored across Departments.

Do you agree:

- ✓ - to an announcement of a White Paper at the Party Conference for publication in the autumn of the next year;
- ✓ - to stressing that it should be eminently readable, have a strong scientific base, and should be accompanied by updated leaflets;
- ✓ - to asking Mr Patten to issue a more detailed policy paper in advance of further work;
- ✓ - to setting up a Ministerial Group with the membership proposed by Sir Robin (and calling on other Ministers as required but not including the Lord President and Mr Baker);
- ✓ - and stressing the need for this group to look particularly carefully at the follow up to the Pearce report;
- ✓ - to expressing caution about the "State of the Environment" report and giving no commitment to publishing one annually until this has been looked into further.

*MS*  
Caroline Sloccock  
3 October 1989

*Haddil*

*(Electricity privatisation)*

*(Carbon tax)*

*Nor  
Murray  
will do it.  
C.P. v. M.A.*