



SAH

Prime Minister

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - PROPOSAL FOR SITING IN UK

Chris Patten copied to me his minute to you of 23 November.

I agree with him that the balance of advantage rests in presenting a range of possible UK sites to the Environment Council meeting tomorrow. I think it would be a great pity if the excellent booklet which his Department has prepared were not to become more widely available to other Member states. There has been considerable pressure from various Scottish interests for the Agency to be located in Scotland and it would be very helpful to me to be able to point to the prominence of Aberdeen and Edinburgh in the DOE booklet.

I also think that it would be wrong to reach a firm decision on our final choice of a UK site without further discussion. In particular, I am not convinced that London would be our best choice. This may be an occasion when we would be justified in striking out in a different direction rather than following the lead of other Member states in nominating their capitals. Both Cambridge and Edinburgh have an international reputation, both scientifically and culturally. In these environment-conscious days surely we should be thinking much more seriously about locating such agencies away from the major conurbations.

As you would expect, my own preference would be for Edinburgh. I do not think that its case is set out adequately in the Annex to Chris's note although I am pleased to say that such shortcomings are not evident in his Department's booklet. I would hope that a much more careful evaluation of the respective strengths and weaknesses of London, Edinburgh and Cambridge can be undertaken so that we may all have confidence in the final UK choice.

I am copying this minute to the Foreign Secretary, the Secretaries of
State for Industry, ^{the Environment} Wales and Northern Ireland, and Sir Robin Butler.

MR

MALCOLM RIFKIND

27 November 1989



Rie Austin

CEPT
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This is come in very
late. Does it affect

Prime Minister

It looks as if we
should have a brief
discussion of

27 November 1989

your conclusion? I have
no say but I think it
most unlikely that an
EC irritation would go

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - PROPOSAL FOR SITING IN UK

will cop? no Northern Ireland

I have seen Chris Patten's note to you about the proposed UK bid for the Agency. I would like to place on record a strong case for Northern Ireland to be the UK candidate for the siting of the Agency. In doing so I am not pressing for a particular option in the way we mount the UK bid but rather I am attempting to flesh out the rather sparse details about the Northern Ireland bid in the Annex to Chris Patten's note which I feel does not do us justice. CBP
27/11
Please
how
also
see

A Northern Ireland location (and we can offer a number of suitable sites) offers three keys elements:

- an advanced telecommunication and computing infrastructure;
 - a wide breadth of scientific expertise in environmental studies (including UK leaders in a number of fields); and
 - the most cogent argument, in Community terms, for a UK site.
- Scottish
Secretary;
minute
(attached)
CBP.*

The telecommunications network in Northern Ireland is as advanced as anywhere in the UK and is being enhanced by a £100 million investment by BT to establish a fibre-optic network which will give