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Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Whitehall Place London SW1A 2HH

From the
Minister of State

M Pattison Esq
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Told MAFF that we
we content, subject
to confirmation of
dates at the end
na MAP 29/x
29 October 1981

Dear Mr Pattison

COUNCIL OF FISHERIES MINISTERS: 27 OCTOBER 1981

I attach a copy of the statement which
Mr Buchanan-Smith hopes to make to the House
today. I would be grateful for immediate
clearance.

I am copying this letter to Mr Ingham; Mr Heyhoe
(Leader of the House's Office); Mr Maclean
(Whip's Office, Commons); Mr Pownall (Whip's
Office, Lords); Mr Wright (Cabinet Office);
Mr Buckley (Chancellor of the Duchy of
Lancaster's Office), and to private secretaries
of the other Agriculture Ministers and members
of the OD(E).

Yours sincerely

Sarah Nason
Private Secretary

FISHERIES COUNCIL MEETINGS, 29 SEPTEMBER AND 27 OCTOBER

STATEMENT FOR MINISTER OF STATE (COMMONS)

With permission Mr Speaker, I wish to make a statement about meetings of the Council of Fisheries Ministers.

Since I last reported to the House on the Common Fisheries Policy negotiations, there have been two meetings of the Council of Fisheries Ministers under the Presidency of my Rt Hon Friend, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. My Rt Hon Friend, the Secretary of State for Scotland and I represented the United Kingdom.

At the first meeting, on 29 September, the Council reached agreement on a revised marketing system which included three important elements: first, a more effective and speedier method to protect fishermen from low priced imports from countries outside the Community; second, revised tariff arrangements for herring so that Community processors will be encouraged to take supplies of herring caught by United Kingdom fishermen; and third, to bring within the marketing arrangements additional species of fish, including lobsters and salmon.

On conservation, the Council decided to continue the present measures without limit of time.

It was agreed to renew for a further year financial assistance for the construction and modernisation of fishing vessels. This will be of considerable assistance to United Kingdom fishermen.

The Council also agreed to a number of external arrangements including a long-term framework agreement with Canada and reciprocal arrangements for 1981 with the Faroes and Sweden.

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This meeting was an important step forward in two respects. First, the agreements on marketing, on conservation and on structural grants are of considerable value in themselves to the United Kingdom fishing industry. Second, the resolution of all these matters has cleared the way for a further attempt to settle the remaining issues on the Common Fisheries Policy. The main purpose of the second Council meeting, on 27 October, was therefore to prepare for this.

At that meeting I confirmed the United Kingdom's position on access, quotas, structures and control. The Council agreed to make a real attempt to reach a comprehensive settlement at the next meeting on 30 November and 1 December.

There are still major outstanding problems, but the opportunity to reach a settlement has been established.