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ASC

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

From the Minister's Private Office

W Rickett Esq
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
London SW1

28 July 1983

Dear Willie

COUNCIL OF FISHERIES MINISTERS: 25-26 JULY 1983

- ... I attach a copy of the statement which Mr Jopling hopes to make in the House today. I would be grateful for immediate clearance.
- / I am copying this letter to Bernard Ingham; David Heyhoe (Leader of the House's Office); Murdo Maclean (Whip's Office, Commons); David Beamish (Whip's Office, Lords); David Wright (Cabinet Office); Keith Long (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
Robert Lawson

ROBERT LOWSON
Private Secretary

With permission Mr Speaker, I wish to make a statement on the meeting of the Council of Fisheries Ministers on 25 and 26 July.

Together with the Minister of State at the Scottish Office and my hon Friend the Minister of State in my Department, I represented the United Kingdom.

Once again the Council could not agree about the allocation of quotas for North Sea herring and I greatly regret that it proved to be impossible to settle other parts of the package, including the proposed arrangements on structures, in the absence of agreement on herring. The methods of determining quotas for herring will be discussed further by officials before the next meeting of the Council on 3 October.

The Council also refused to confirm the Community's fishing agreement with Norway. But the Council did agree, by a qualified majority, to permit the Norwegians to extend their interim fishing for North Sea herring to two-thirds of their proposed allocation of 31,000 tonnes. I voted against this proposal. The considerations were finely balanced. I attach great importance to our fishery relations with Norway and would certainly not wish in any way to harm them. And there are very important advantages for our fishing fleet in the maintenance of the Agreement with Norway. But I nevertheless concluded that I should not support an arrangement which permitted Norwegian fishermen to fish for North Sea herring when United Kingdom fishermen were not able to do so.

Lastly, in my statement on the previous Council meeting I was asked about the possibility of extending controls over foreign Klondykers. I am glad to say that my Rt Hon Friends and I are laying an Order before Parliament today which will extend to foreign vessels the arrangements which currently apply to British pelagic vessels trans-shipping their catch to Klondykers within our fishery limits.

28 JUL 1987

