



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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1 November 1990

Dear Charles,

CM.

Prime Minister's Speech to the Second World Climate Conference

Thank you for copying to us your letter to Phillip Ward of 31 October. We have the following comments on the latest draft of the speech.

Page 13, second paragraph: our recent contacts on this subject in Washington suggest that the "insurance" analogy strikes something of a chord there. It may therefore be worth expanding this reference along the following lines:

"....challenge now. I see the adoption of these policies as the sort of insurance premium any prudent person takes out against fire, flood or other disaster. We do not know precisely in what form the problem will hit us, but we do know that we can face and tackle it with a great deal more confidence if we have taken out adequate insurance beforehand. Limited action now is likely to be a great deal more manageable and less disruptive than the much greater adjustments we would otherwise be required to make later. This message has already.....".

Page 15, second paragraph: a problem with this and the subsequent paragraph as phrased is that by concentrating exclusively on carbon dioxide it seems to preclude the much more economically efficient possibility of eventual action on all greenhouse gases taken together. The third sentence of this paragraph might therefore become:

"But of the other greenhouse gases carbon dioxide is by far the most extensive...."

and the first sentence of the first paragraph on page 16 might become:

"These figures underline why a joint international effort to curb greenhouse gases in general and carbon dioxide, in particular, is so important".



Page 20, first paragraph: we see advantage here both in making it clear that we want the developing countries fully involved and in specifying those subjects on which we wish to see protocols. This paragraph might be changed to read as follows:

"But our immediate task this week is to carry as many countries as possible with us - both developed and developing - so that we can negotiate a successful framework convention on climate change in 1992. We must also begin work on the substantive protocols that will be necessary to make the convention work, and which should in particular cover greenhouse gas emissions and forests."

I am copying this letter to Phillip Ward (Department of the Environment), John Neilson (Department of Energy), John Gieve (HM Treasury), Suma Chakrabarti (Overseas Development Administration) and Professor Stewart (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever,*

(S L Gass)  
Private Secretary

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