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GA

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING OF E(A): 6 OCTOBER

You may like over the weekend to have a first look at the papers for next Thursday's meeting of E(A).

There are three items on the agenda:

1. Nitrates

Last February E(A) commissioned the Cabinet Office to coordinate substantial further work. The paper at Flag A fulfils that remit. Briefs by the Cabinet Office - Flag B - and the Policy Unit - Flag C - provide a steer through the issues.

2. Powers to deal with MMC Reports

You were unhappy with the proposals circulated recently by Francis Maude, and asked the Department of Trade and Industry to submit a paper to E(A). That has now been done, and the paper is at Flag D. Briefing will follow next week.

3. Update on Northern Ireland Economic Issues.

Tom King's paper - Flag E - gives an update on the position at James Mackie, Harland and Wolff, and Shorts. Frankly, it doesn't take us much further on any of these issues. Your main aim will be to ensure that effective action is in hand. I doubt if you will want to use E(A) as the right forum to resolve the issues raised on precise levels of external financing limits for Harland and Wolff and Shorts - I suggest you remit that to Northern Ireland Office/Treasury discussions. Further briefing on this paper will follow next week.

PG

Rec.

30 September, 1988.