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DA

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From the Private Secretary

24 October 1988

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 21 October on a possible international environmental initiative. She agrees with the line suggested by your Secretary of State and that officials should now begin to work this up into more substantive form. She would of course want to see the results of that more detailed work before any announcement of the initiative were made. I should be grateful if you could let me have a note of more detailed proposals within the next fortnight.

BF //

I am copying this letter to Stephen Wall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

(DOMINIC MORRIS)

Roger Bright, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

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Prime Minister

- Content for Mr Ridley's officials to work this up? Yes not

- Agree no announcement before you have seen the more detailed DOE proposals? Yes not

DM 21/x

Prime Minister

We discussed briefly yesterday your request for an international environmental initiative.

In response, I am proposing that you should call an International Ministerial Conference on chlorofluorocarbons and other chemicals that affect the ozone layer. The elimination of the use of the chemicals that are affecting the ozone layer is a simple, single purpose measure. It is based on proven science, it is not too difficult or too expensive to do, and it is a global problem which can only be solved internationally. To concentrate on this single issue is not only important (perhaps a third of the "greenhouse effect" could be due to the chemicals which also deplete the ozone layer), but it is something which it is possible to achieve and quickly.

In my judgement the best time for the Conference would be next March. This is because in April 1989 the Finns will be hosting, in association with the United Nations Environment Programme, the first meeting of the parties to the Montreal Protocol. This meeting, which will be attended mainly by senior officials, scientists and representatives of industry (with a sprinkling of environment ministers), will mark the formal start of the review of the science, technology and economics which will lead to stronger measures to control CFCs. I believe that a high level Conference, convened or possibly chaired by you in London, would give effective political clout to the April meeting. We could announce your initiative as soon as the colleagues concerned are all content - maybe even within a few days.

If you agree, I will ask officials to work up something more substantive in terms of content, participation, timing etc. I would also ask Malcolm Caithness to start paving the way with

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UNEP, the Finnish Minister (whom he has met), and friends from the EC, Scandinavia and North America.

I am copying this letter to Geoffrey Howe and Sir Robin Butler.

R. S. W.

RS N R
21 October 1988

(approved by the Secretary of State
and signed in his absence).

friends from

Robin Butler.



COMPLIMENTS