



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

1 September 1980

The Prime Minister has recently had brought to her attention the problems faced by private inventors in the United Kingdom in securing commercial exploitation of their inventions. She has been told - not for the first time - that the environment in this country provides less encouragement to invention than is the case elsewhere. I enclose a note from one particular inventor who has approached the Prime Minister over his problems, in which he sets out the position as he sees it.

The Prime Minister recognises that most inventions are naturally made by the employees of companies rather than by individual inventors, but she wishes to ensure that we remove any barriers that inhibit the commercial application of new ideas generated by the natural inventiveness of the British people.

The Government is seeking through its economic policies to improve the general climate for innovation and risk-taking activities. The Prime Minister would, therefore, welcome a note from the Council on the particular problems faced by individual inventors together with suggestions as to how these might be overcome. She understands that ACARD has a study on innovation already in progress, and she looks forward to seeing that report in due course. But she would find it helpful to have a quick study of this specific problem, intended to produce a short note not necessarily designed for publication at this stage.

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