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Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG
01-233 3000

13 February 1985

The Rt. Hon. Norman Tebbit MP
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

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POST OFFICE: OBJECTIVES AND CORPORATE PLAN

You wrote me a further letter on 8 February about objectives for the Post Office and the 1984 Corporate Plan.

I am grateful to you for telling me of your proposals. They seem to meet all my concerns about both the proposed objectives and the Plan and I am encouraged to see these signs of significant progress.

I agree that work on the important and inter-related issues of the letter monopoly, privatisation and objectives should be taken forward independently of the 1985 Plan, but I suggest that we need to set down a firm time-table and announce it now. You will recall that my letter of 29 January proposed an E(NI) discussion on the 1985 Plan before the summer Recess. Privatisation and the letter monopoly could then be examined during the summer and your officials, in conjunction with mine, could prepare a paper by the autumn on the possible ways and effects of relaxing the postal monopoly and the scope for the early introduction of private capital. I think this paper might most suitably be taken in E(CP).

The outcome of any E(CP) discussion could have fundamental implications for the Post Office's objectives. I therefore agree that the objectives exercise should proceed to the same time-table as the E(CP) paper and should take account of E(CP)'s conclusions.

I am copying this letter to the other members of E(NI) and E(CP) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

NIGEL LAWSON

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Lawson'.

POST + TAX

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