

PRIME MINISTER

EXPORT GROUP FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES: PRESS

I do hope that you do not waste too much time this weekend worrying about this speech from a media point of view.

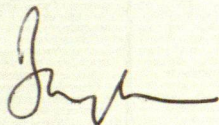
2. All your best speeches are done extemporary - or so it seems - and I think you should approach this occasion in a relaxed frame of mind.

3. The press will be there and for those whose shorthand is inadequate, Mr Gaffin (who will accompany you along with Mr Vereker) has arranged for the COI to taperecord and provide a transcript for issue to the press as soon as possible after the event.

4. Radio and television will also be there and we would be quite wrong at this stage to exclude them; indeed, it is virtually impossible to do so when the writing press are there.

5. They will treat your speech on its news merit. All I suggest is that if, after due reflection over the weekend and on Monday morning, you have any particular message you would like to get over, let us know and we could:

- tip off radio and TV about the point to cover (and most helpfully when you are likely to say it);
- highlight this passage to the writing press.



B. INGHAM

20 November, 1981.

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SUMMARY

MR SCHOLAR

cc. Mr. Ingham

Export Group for the Construction Industries Lunch

You explained to me this afternoon that the Prime Minister has decided to speak spontaneously at this lunch on the basis of notes.

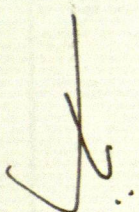
The Prime Minister might find it helpful to draw upon the two attached texts, which are Alistair McAlpine's contribution (Flag B), and a revised version of my draft (Flag A) which incorporates a few of the points in Alistair McAlpine's.

SUMMARY

As the Prime Minister will see, my text takes the form of a few introductory remarks, followed by some appropriate references to the construction industries export achievements in the past, on the basis of which I have built the theme which the Prime Minister wanted to introduce into the Guildhall speech of our having got out of the habit of matching expectations with effort, and of having lost our spirit of common purpose. The draft then moves on to the increasing competitiveness of our export industries, with some examples of recent important contracts won by contractors. It concludes with a short piece about the Government's role - ECGD, Ministerial visits and aid - and a short peroration on the theme of the construction industry as it heralds our economic recovery.

You undertook to put this round tonight for clearance, in case the Prime Minister should use the facts, which are, I think, correct. The passage on aid and credit ought, however, to be looked at particularly carefully.

Bernard Ingham is putting in a note about the media arrangements, which you and I discussed with him, in the light of the absence of a text, which Bernard did not think would cause a problem.


20 November, 1981