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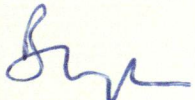
MR. RYDER

Reference: Your minute of 16 May

John Pilger's piece was disgraceful. It was drawn to our attention immediately by BIS New York. Efforts are being made through BIS New York to get influential people to write to the New York Times repudiating it. I have seen one published so far.

In addition, I am raising the whole issue of Pilger writing such ludicrous stuff with Johnny Apple, the New York Times' Chief Correspondent in London.

Personally, I think anybody who gives Pilger space is potentially lending themselves to a campaign and I am astounded that the New York Times has fallen for it. That will be the gist of my message to Mr. Apple. The Paymaster General is also involved in this exercise.



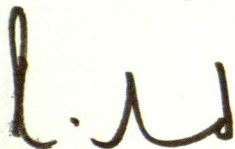
B. INGHAM

20 May, 1980

MR INGHAM

This article is now old hat, and I hope that I am hardened enough to take the sort of criticism offered by John Pilger.

But I wonder, in view of the still large numbers of people employed at BIS and indeed in our Embassy in Washington, whether anyone arranged for a letter to be written to the New York Times repudiating the rather extraordinary conclusions of Mr Pilger, one of which was a thin implication, alleging the Prime Minister's views had something in common with Nazism. This view becomes apparent in Mr Pilger's last paragraph.



Richard Ryder

16th May 1980

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Mr Ingham
Towntex



Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 01-

S Wright Esq
BIS
New York

Your reference

Our reference PGN/301/8

Date 12 May 1980

THE PILGER ARTICLE

1. Andrew Alexander of the Daily Mail has declined to alter his article to a letter. As a result it has been decided that we should take the following action:

- X
- (i) Bernard Ingham, Chief Press Officer at No 10, will write to the New York Times London correspondent to register HMG's displeasure that while giving publicity to Pilger's tendentious piece, they have not given the right of reply other than in letter form.
 - (ii) You in BIS New York should get suitably important or influential businessmen (or others) to write to the New York Times expressing their displeasure. It would be better if their letters were published, but even if they are not something will be achieved. May I leave you to follow this one up?

2. We are always pleased to receive the copies of articles about Britain from the American press which you send us. While we may not make direct use of most of them, they are still worth having and I would like you to keep up the service.

M G Dougal
Overseas Information Department

cc R Prescott Esq
(Mr Maude's Office)

N Gaffin Esq
No 10 Downing Street

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Press Secretary

MR. PRESCOTT

Many thanks for your letter of May 7 on the New York Times. I gather that Neville in discussion with you has suggested that a number of additional letters should be organised. I certainly agree with that.

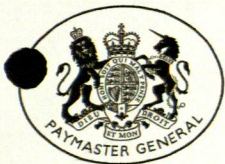
I am, however, pretty furious with BIS New York. It is acutely embarrassing to organise a journalist to write an article for the New York Times only to discover, when it has been written, that the New York Times has a positive and exclusive policy against replies on its Op-Ed page.

I feel like telling them that this has caused us embarrassment. In the meantime, I think I shall take issue with Johnny Apple, their resident correspondent in London, making known our extreme concern that they should give Pilger space and deny other more objective contributors the same opportunity.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'B. Ingham'.

B. INGHAM

9 May, 1980



Mr Ingham of
Suggested one or two
more letters...

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

NG
8.51

7 May 1980

Bernard Ingham Esq
Press Secretary
10 Downing Street
SW1

Dear Bernard

NEW YORK TIMES: PILGER ARTICLE

I conveyed the gist of our conversation last Friday to Heather Harrison in the Overseas Department of the FCO. She subsequently telephoned BIS New York and made your point of view known in no uncertain terms. The response from BIS New York is given in the attached telegram. This is not in the least helpful from our point of view, the only good point being that someone has already responded in the letters page in the New York Times - copy telegram also attached.

Do you think we can take this matter further, bearing in mind the delay? I do not think Andrew Alexander would welcome having to do a rewrite, and the letters column hardly carries the same weight as the Op-Ed page.

You ever
feeling hesit

Organise
more
letters!

R E S PRESCOTT
Private Secretary

IMMEDIATE

NYFO/16/05

HS/OID ✓

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[COPY TO RC]

UNCLASSIFIED
FROM BIS NEWYORK 052150Z MAY 80
TO IMMEDIATE F C O
TELEGRAM NUMBER INDEP 26 OF 5 MAY

FOLLOWING FOR ALLAN OID.

NEW YORK TIMES: PILGER ARTICLE.

1. I HAVE URGED MR ALEXANDER'S ARTICLE ON THE EDITOR OF THE OP-ED PAGE, LEAVING HER IN NO DOUBT AS TO THE STRENGTH OF FEELING AROUSED BY JOHN PILGER'S PIECE. BUT THE PAPER'S RULES ABSOLUTELY PRECLUDE PRINTING REBUTTALS ON THE OP-ED PAGE (MY TELEGRAM NO. INDEP 24).
2. GIVEN THIS, I HAVE ALSO DISCUSSED WITH THE LETTERS EDITOR. THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO GIVE FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION TO A REBUTTAL IN LETTER FORM FROM MR ALEXANDER, WHICH COULD BE AS MUCH AS 400 WORDS, THEIR MAXIMUM (PRESENT ARTICLE 1300 WORDS). I HAVE ASSURED THEM THAT ANY SUCH LETTER WOULD BE EXCLUSIVE TO THEM.
3. IF MR ALEXANDER WILL REDRAFT IN LETTER FORM, PLEASE TELEX TEXT. LETTERS EDITOR EMPHASISES THAT SPEED IS IMPORTANT, TO AVOID OUTDATING (AND ONE REBUTTAL FROM LONDON HAS ALREADY BEEN PRINTED (MY TELEGRAM NO. INDEP 25)).

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FM BIS NEW YORK 021510Z MAY 80
TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER INDEP 25 OF 2 MAY

MY TELEGRAM NUMBER 24 OF 30 APRIL.

NEW YORK TIMES OF 2 MAY PUBLISHES A LETTER TO THE EDITOR FROM DOUGLAS CRITCHLEY, LONDON. TEXT FOLLOWS.

BEGINS: JOHN PILGER'S APRIL 18 OP-ED ARTICLE ON MARGARET THATCHER IS RUBBISH. EVEN IF HE HAD HAD HIS FACTS RIGHT, HIS EMOTIVE LANGUAGE WOULD STILL HAVE CREATED AN UTTERLY FALSE PICTURE.

MR PILGER SAYS, "IN 1977-78 LESS THAN DOLLARS 8.8 MILLION WAS ILLEGALLY CLAIMED IN SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS." IT WOULD HAVE BEEN TRUER TO SAY THAT ILLEGAL CLAIMS FOR MORE THAN DOLLARS 8.7 MILLION WERE UNCOVERED. MANY MORE SUCH CLAIMS CAN BE PRESUMED TO HAVE GONE UNDETECTED.

THE ARTICLE WAS FULL OF SUCH DISTORTIONS. IN REFERRING TO THE MOR TALI TY RATE FOR MINERS, MR PILGER DOES NOT MENTION THAT, BECAUSE THE INDUSTRY IS CONTRACTING, THE AVERAGE AGE IS HIGH. THIS IS IN NO WAY THE FAULT OF MRS THATCHER.

IT IS TRUE THAT BRITISH HOSPITALS ARE SHORT OF MONEY. WHERE ARE THEY NOT? MRS THATCHER IS CUTTING GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE BELOW THAT PLANNED BY THE PREVIOUS LABOR GOVERNMENT BECAUSE THAT EXPENDITURE COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN MET BY A STRONG EXPANSION OF THE MONEY SUPPLY, AND INFLATION WAS ALREADY RISING. MRS THATCHER'S INTENTION IS TO GET THAT INFLATION DOWN.

MANY BRITONS THINK THAT HER POLICIES ARE MORE LIKELY TO SUCCEED THAN THOSE OF "THE RESPECTED CAMBRIDGE ECONOMIC POLICY REVIEW GROUP," WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN TRIED AND FAILED, AS DID TED HEATH'S ATTEMPT TO "RUN FOR GROWTH" BY INFLATING. WHETHER OR NOT HER POLICIES SUCCEED IN CREATING GROWTH, SHE HAS TO PERSIST WITH THEM FOR THE TIME BEING TO REVERSE THE INFLATION WE

~~KTFEO WHDJDZG~~

~~Z SENSIBLY IMPLEMENTED AS SHE WOULDQVONCC~~

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HER POLICIES SUCCEED IN CREATING GROWTH, SHE HAS TO PERSIST WITH THEM FOR THE TIME BEING TO REVERSE THE INFLATIONARY SPIRAL.

CHANGE IS NEVER POPULAR, AND MRS THATCHER'S POLICIES HAVE NOT ALWAYS BEEN AS SENSIBLY IMPLEMENTED AS SHE WOULD HAVE WISHED. IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT SHE WILL NOW BE AS VIGOROUS AT THE EXECUTIVE LEVEL AS SHE HAS BEEN AT THE POLICY LEVEL. SURELY IT IS UNFAIR TO CRITICIS A LONE WOMAN FOR NOT HAVING CURED ALL OF A NATION'S AILING ECONOMY IN NINE MONTHS OF AUTHORITY. TO CRITICIZE HER IN A FOREIGN NEWSPAPER, WHOSE READERS ARE LESS LIKELY TO BE ABLE TO SEE THE DISTORTIONS OF THE TRUTH, IS COWARDLY.

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TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 05-08-2001 BY 60322
UCBAW/BJS

SECRET

SECRET

1 To Anton ^{CA}
 Andrew Alexander is a rep.
 Prescott in touch with him.
 2 A paper - to see
 3-7



10 DOWNING STREET

Richard Prescott

A. Lingham

Here is the very
 intemperate Riggs article
 in the N.Y. Times.
 I think we should try
 to counter this piece and
 I am sure the Fed.
 (Ombudsman Dept)
 would appreciate any
 suggestion the Permanent
 General might have in
 Jamaica that might be
 worth to write a paper ^{24/4}
 Charles A

to see

CA
 23/4

BT for action

TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 10

RESTRICTED

GR 300

RESTRICTED

FM BIS NEW YORK 182129Z APR 80
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 9 OF 18 APRIL
INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON

FOLLOWING FOR NEWS DEPARTMENT

PILGER ARTICLE IN NEW YORK TIMES.

1. MIFT (NOT REPEATED TO WASHINGTON) IS TEXT OF ARTICLE ON OP-ED PAGE OF TODAY'S NEW YORK TIMES BY JOHN PILGER, DESCRIBED AS A WRITER FOR THE DAILY MIRROR. IT IS AN EXTREME AND IMPASSIONED ATTACK ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF QUOTE THATCHERISM UNQUOTE, IN PILGER'S VIEW QUOTE A POLITICAL INIQUITY WITHOUT PARALLEL IN BRITAIN'S POST-WAR HISTORY UNQUOTE.

2. A POSSIBLE COUNTER WOULD BE TO REBUT ANY FACTUAL ERRORS IN PILGER'S STATISTICS. BUT THAT MEANS FIGHTING ON GROUND OF PILGER'S CHOOSING AND, EVEN IF ERRORS EXIST, CORRECTED FIGURES MIGHT NOT BE IMPRESSIVE, AND WOULD LEAVE PILGER'S GENERAL THRUST UNCHALLENGED.

A BETTER APPROACH IN MY VIEW WOULD BE TO INVITE A CONSERVATIVE JOURNALIST, OR A CONSERVATIVE MP, TO ARGUE THE CONTRARY VIEW DEFENDING THE ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES OF QUOTE THATCHERISM UNQUOTE WHILE REBUTTING CHARGES OF SOCIAL CALLOUSNESS. THIS WOULD BE A MORE EFFECTIVE COUNTER THAN A NECESSARILY BALANCED OFFICIAL RESPONSE, AND WOULD BE MORE ATTRACTIVE JOURNALISM. AN 800-WORD ARTICLE WOULD BE IDEAL.

3. AS FIRST STEP GRATEFUL TO KNOW IF YOUR AGREE, AND CAN FIND AN AUTHOR. WE WOULD THEN SEEK THE PAPER'S PRIOR AGREEMENT, TO PUBLISH ON THE OP-ED PAGE. IF NOT FORTHCOMING, WE WOULD RECOMMEND SENDING A SHORTER VERSION AS A LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

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FROM BIS NEW YORK 182130Z APR 80

TO PRIORITY F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 10 OF 18 APRIL

FOLLOWING FOR NEWS DEPARTMENT

M I P T: PILGER ARTICLE IN NEW YORK TIMES

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF ARTICLE.

BEGINS

LONDON - WE HAVE ENTERED A DARK PERIOD IN BRITAIN, DURING WHICH MANY OF THE PRECIOUS GAINS OF OUR MODERN CIVILIZATION ARE BEING VANDALIZED. ALMOST EVERY DAY NOW, THE BRITISH PRESS CARRIES HEARING STORIES OF HUMAN TRAGEDY THAT ARE THE DIRECT RESULT OF POLITICAL DECISIONS.

IN THE NORTHERN CITY OF SUNDERLAND, THREE CHILDREN DIE IN A FIRE THAT WAS STARTED BECAUSE THEY HAD TO USE CANDLES AFTER THE STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD CUT OFF THE POWER IN THEIR HOME. THEIR IMPOVERISHED PARENTS, BOTH MADE REDUNDANT FROM THEIR JOBS, COULD NOT AFFORD TO PAY THE BILLS. SUCH SUFFERING IS NOW COMMON. SURGEONS AT ONE OF BRITAIN'S MOST CELEBRATED TEACHING HOSPITALS, KING'S COLLEGE IN LONDON, ANNOUNCE THAT THEIR PATIENTS ARE BEGINNING TO DIE, PERHAPS IN THE HUNDREDS, BECAUSE THEY ARE DENIED THE MOST BASIC EQUIPMENT SUCH AS HEART PACEMAKERS. DOCTORS AT HOSPITALS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ARE NOW OPERATING A TRIAGE SYSTEM SIMILAR TO THAT USED, OUT OF DESPERATION, IN THE OVERFLOWING FIELD HOSPITALS OF WORLD WAR I. "WHAT IT MEANS," SAID A CANCER SPECIALIST, "IS THAT DUE TO A STARVATION OF FUNDS, WE MUST NOW CHOOSE WHO WILL LIVE AND WHO WILL DIE."

IT IS NEARLY A YEAR SINCE MARGARET THATCHER CAME TO POWER AS PRIME MINISTER. IN THAT TIME, A NEW "ISM" HAS ENTERED OUR EVERYDAY LANGUAGE: "THATCHERISM." WHAT THATCHERISM HAS DONE TO THE FABRIC OF BRITISH SOCIETY AND TO THE PROSPECTS OF BRITAIN'S WEALTH-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES AMOUNTS, IN MY VIEW, TO A POLITICAL INIQUITY WITHOUT PARALLEL IN BRITAIN'S POSTWAR HISTORY.

I SHOULD SAY WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY THAT I BELONG TO NO POLITICAL PARTY OR GROUP AND THAT I SHARE THE BELIEF THAT THE POLITICAL INFECTION NOW IDENTIFIED AS THATCHERISM TOOK ROOT IN OUR BODY POLITIC DURING THE DELUSIONARY YEARS OF HAROLD WILSON'S LABOUR GOVERNMENT AND SPREAD, UNCHECKED, DURING THE TIME OF JAMES CALLAGHAN'S ADMINISTRATION. TWO VINTAGE MYTHS CHERISHED IN THE UNITED STATES WERE THAT BRITAIN WAS BECOMING A PIT OF SOCIALISM AND THAT MRS. THATCHER WOULD BRING BACK ROBUST FREE ENTERPRISE EXCLAIM WHAT ARRANT NONSENSE EXCLAIM EVEN BEFORE MRS. THATCHER, ONLY IRELAND, AMONG OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS, SPENT PROPORTIONATELY LESS ON SOCIAL SERVICES THAN BRITAIN. INDEED, OUR "WELFARE STATE" WAS ALWAYS PART DREAM, PART FRAIL REALITY.

/OUR

OUR RICH WERE ALLOWED TO GROW PROPORTIONATELY RICHER THAN THE RICH OF MOST OTHER WESTERN NATIONS, SO THAT TODAY A MERE TENTH OF THE POPULATION OWNS 61 PERCENT OF THE NATIONAL WEALTH. THOSE VISITORS FROM THE UNITED STATES WHO INQUIRE ARE SHOCKED BY THE LOW LEVEL OF WAGES ON WHICH MILLIONS OF OUR PEOPLE TRY TO LIVE. UP UNTIL THE COAL MINERS WERE FORCED TO STRIKE IN 1972, BRITAIN'S WORKFORCE REMAINED DOCILE WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THEIR CLASS, HOLDING THE POVERTY LINE WITH ACCESS TO REASONABLY PRICED FOOD AND CLOTHING AND LOW RENTS. SADLY, THE TOLERANCE AND GENTLENESS AND LACK OF GREED AMONG ORDINARY BRITONS MADE THEM TOO EASY TO EXPLOIT.

THATCHERISM, AS REPRESENTED BY A CABINET WHOSE LEADING MEMBERS GREW UP MOSTLY IN THE RIDICULOUS TOP HATS AND TAILS OF ETON COLLEGE AND THAT BOASTS MORE INHERITED PERSONAL WEALTH THAN ANY CABINET SINCE 1822, IS NOW DELIVERING THE COUP DE GRACE.

IN HIS RECENT BUDGET, THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, CUT TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED, SLUM-CLEARANCE PROGRAMS AND FUNDS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PEOPLE AT WORK. BRITISH WORKING CONDITIONS ALREADY ARE AMONG THE DIRTIEST, DAMPEST AND UNHEALTHIEST IN EUROPE, WHICH HELPS TO EXPLAIN WHY THE MORTALITY RATE FOR MINERS, MACHINE-TOOL OPERATORS, BUILDING LABORERS AND OTHER WORKING PEOPLE RANGES FROM ABOUT 900 TO 1,650 PER 100,000.

UNLIKE "MODERATE" TORIES, THE THATCHERITES ARE ABDONDONING AN ALL-PARTY CONSENSUS THAT SINCE WORLD WAR II HAS AIMED, AT LEAST IN THEORY, AT IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE ON THE EDGES OF OUR INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY. HAVING ANNOUNCED PETTY "NECESSARY" RISES IN THE PRICE OF SCHOOL MILK, ON WHICH THE POOREST CHILDREN OFTEN DEPEND FOR NUTRITION, AND MEASURES THAT WILL ENSURE THE WHOLESALING OF TEACHERS, AND AMOUNT TO A FRONTAL ASSAULT ON STATE EDUCATION, SIR GEOFFREY PUBLICLY SHORED UP THE APEX OF PRIVILEGE IN BRITAIN: ROYALTY. TO ONE OF THE WORLD'S WEALTHIEST FAMILIES, HE GAVE, OUT OF THE PUBLIC PURSE, A TAX-FREE INCREASE OF DOLLARS 1.1 MILLION. PRINCESS ANNE'S UNTAXED PERSONAL ALLOWANCE IS TO GO UP 30 PERCENT, TO APPROXIMATELY DOLLARS 187,000, BECAUSE, EXPLAINS BUCKINGHAM PALACE, THE UNLOVED PRINCESS HAS "OVERSPENT" ON THE MAGNIFICENT COUNTRY ESTATE THAT THE QUEEN GAVE HER AS A WEDDING PRESENT. AT THE SAME TIME, THE THATCHERITES HAVE LAUNCHED AN "ANTI-SCROUNGER" CAMPAIGN, THE OBJECT OF WHICH IS TO CONVINCING THE NATION THAT MANY OF THE UNEMPLOYED ARE DEFRAUDING THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM. THE CAMPAIGN ITSELF IS FRAUDULENT. IN 1977-78, LESS THAN DOLLARS 8.8 MILLION WAS ILLEGALLY CLAIMED IN SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS, COMPARED WITH APPROXIMATELY DOLLARS 748 MILLION IN LEGAL BENEFITS THAT ARE NOT CLAIMED EVERY YEAR.

THE MONETARIST ECONOMIC POLICIES OF THATCHERISM ARE BASED ON THE SIMPLISTIC OBSERVATIONS OF PROF. MILTON FRIEDMAN WHOSE BELIEF IN AN "UNFAIR" WORLD IS EMBRACED BY MRS. THATCHER.

SO FAR, THESE POLICIES HAVE HELPED TO DOUBLE INFLATION IN ONE YEAR, TO ANNUAL RATE OF 19.1 PERCENT, AND HAVE RETRENCHED MUCH OF OUR INDUSTRY TO THE POINT WHERE, IN THE VIEW OF THE RESPECTED CAMBRIDGE ECONOMIC POLICY REVIEW GROUP, MUCH OF BRITAIN COULD BE AN INDUSTRIAL WASTELAND BY 1984. FREE ENTERPRISE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT; WITH CASH RIGIDLY CONTROLLED AND DEMAND FORCIBLY DEPRESSED, HUNDREDS OF SMALL ENTERPRISING BUSINESSES ARE GOING BANKRUPT, WHILE MAJOR BANKS ANNOUNCE RECORD CASH PROFITS OF MORE THAN DOLLARS 2.2 BILLION.

"THERE IS NO LONGER POVERTY IN BRITAIN," DECLARES SIR KEITH JOSEPH, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDUSTRY. OF COURSE, HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES MAY WELL BELIEVE THIS, FOR THEY RESIDE IN "ANOTHER NATION" - IN FACT, MORE THAN 14 MILLION BRITONS, A QUARTER OF OUR POPULATION, NOW LIVE IN OR CLOSE TO ACTUAL POVERTY. A SOLUTION TO THIS POVERTY, NOT A BRUTALIZING OF THE POOR, REMAINS THE KEY TO THE RENAISSANCE OF OUR NATION.

MANY AMERICANS ADMIRE THE WAY THE BRITISH PEOPLE SUCCESSFULLY STOOD ALONE AGAINST THE NAZIS. THIS WAS ACHIEVED IN GREAT PART BECAUSE EMERGENCY MEASURES OF EQUALITY WERE THRUST UPON OUR CLASS-RIDDEN SOCIETY AND THE NATIONAL BURDEN WAS SHARED MORE THAN EVER BEFORE. NO CHILD WENT TO SLEEP HUNGRY, AS THOUSANDS DO NOW. NO MAN OR WOMAN WAS DECLARED OBSOLETE, AS MILLIONS ARE NOW. MORALE AND INCENTIVE, DECENCY AND COURAGE WON THAT DAY. AND THEY WOULD WIN AGAIN, GIVEN THE CHANCE.

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