

PRIME MINISTER

Your Press Conference

I am making arrangements for you to meet predominantly the British Press in the Town Hall Annexe in which the UK delegation is housed. We can only do it this way because of the exceedingly tight security. We cannot guarantee that only British correspondents will be present because attendance is impossible to control.

We have secured a room which accommodates about 60, and I hope you will agree to do BBC TV & radio, ITN & IRN interviews in the same room after the press conference. We shall clear the press out immediately afterwards.

Could I suggest you come to the UK delegation room in the Town Hall Annexe in the first instance?

You have in the past conducted your press conference before or at the same time as the Presidency. I therefore suggest you come over to the Annexe as soon as convenient after the proceedings are over.

I assume you will wish Lord Carrington to accompany you.

Background

This Council has been dominated in the Press's mind by fish, and you will no doubt wish to bring the Press up to date and put over our point of view. It will be particularly important to scotch any ideas that because we have suggested an acceleration of negotiations we are about to sell out.

I am taking the line that we are as anxious as anyone for a settlement of the CFP consistent with our national interests.

Other issues arising in our press briefings are:

- Interest rates, on which the Financial Times have led the papers this morning; any approach to the USA? I have made the point that it is very difficult to deny the USA the use of mechanisms which have been used with success by some EC countries; in any case US interest rates now seem to be on a downward trend.
- Steel, our attitude to mandatory/voluntary curbs. I have made it clear we need to agree curbs and that we strongly support the view that subsidies should be for restructuring purposes - in line with our massive restructuring.
- Northern Ireland. Mr. Haughey has been extremely cagey on this. I have confirmed that you saw him last evening for five minutes. Mr. Lenihan's article was the only subject discussed; it was more a sorrow than anger meeting.
- Chapman Pincher. I am sure you must rest firmly and simply on: nothing to say at this stage - hope to make a statement on Thursday.
- Your impressions of US Government. This keeps coming back in our briefings, but we have not been communicative, bearing in mind the process of formulation of US policy.

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- 3 -

Nick Fenn attaches some Political Cooperation points.

The Press do not know you plan a walk-about down the
British Street, but I shall tell them after the Press Conference.

Bryman

24-3-81

24 March, 1981