

PRIME MINISTER

(Chassee)

[Not urgent]

Innovators and Entrepreneurs' Reception

Generally, this seems to have been very well received. There was considerable media coverage in a variety of forms, and there is some continuing follow-up.

You might be interested to look at the selection of relevant material in the attached folder. It includes some of the letters we had on Monday from those who were upset not to have been included, some reflections on the discussion in the form of thank you letters from participants, and a letter from Michael Morris MP, saying that he is now being bombarded by inventors who believe that the Government must have instantly set up a new system for processing their ideas. We will pass this, and the other papers, to Kenneth Baker's Office for advice - something better, I hope, than his whispered comment on Monday: - "inventors and inventions come in two varieties - the improbable and the impossible".

We could have generated quite a lot more immediate publicity, if we had chosen to put in more advance effort. The evening was an experiment, and we did not want to overplay it. If you were to repeat it, for similar or different subjects, we could more confidently set out to promote interest. But I think we were right to exclude the press on this occasion, and we would need to think very carefully before changing that decision for the future.

The seminar discussion might have been more productive if we had reduced the numbers a little, and had everyone sitting around a horseshoe table. It would have been a more business-like environment. We also ought to recognise that we need to assume that the discussion phase of such a function requires at least 1½ hours.

Wps Were you broadly satisfied with the evening? Would you like to consider repeating it, perhaps on ~~the~~ more specific, economic

/ or industrial



or industrial themes? Are there any aspects of the arrangements which you found particularly unsatisfactory (we will open the windows in advance another time)?.

I thought it was a good arrangement - easier to control with an 'audience' in front rather than round a horseshoe. But ~~the~~ heads of discussion were too many.

not.

MAP

30 January 1981