

PRIME MINISTER

BBC WORLD PHONE-IN - SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1983

The "phone-in" will take place live at Broadcasting House.

I shall be at home on Sunday, until I have to leave to get to Broadcasting House, and will be in touch with you at Chequers if I think there is anything in the media of which you should be aware. I will await your arrival at Broadcasting House.

You will be met on arrival (1600 hours) by Douglas Muggerridge, Managing Director, External Services, who will escort you to the studio in the basement of the building. This involves a longish walk. Before the programme begins there will be a photocall in the studio, and again after the programme with the presenter and the production team.

During the programme only the presenter, Margaret Howard, and a girl assistant will be in the studio with you. The programme will be in two parts: from 1630 to 1700, when there will be a 9-minute break for the news, and then from 1709 to 1730.

BBC listeners have already been invited to write in and others can telephone prior to the programme. Those selected by the producer will be rung back during the programme and their "seriousness and sanity" checked. Before a question is put to you you will be handed a card giving the listener's name and country. You can anticipate some 12-15 questions and those likely to be favoured by the producer will cover major and topical issues of policy.

Indications so far are that questions will cover:

- Grenada; ●
- Hong Kong; ●
- Cruise deployment; ●
- East/West relations; ●
- Anglo/Indian relations. ●

It is also possible that questions on the future of the BBC External Services and on the Government's proposals to give the vote to certain expatriats might come up. You can also expect to be asked about your leisure interests.

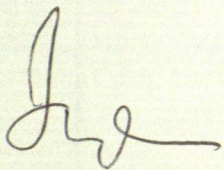
As Parliament is now in session and you are heavily briefed for Questions I have not troubled you with much briefing. But you will find some in the following Annexes:

- A Votes for Britons resident abroad;
- B Immigration policy;
- C BBC External Services;
- D India;
- E NHS treatment of overseas visitors;
- F UK Social Security pensioners abroad.
- G Papers which show sources of calls for other world phone-ins.

The producer hopes you will adopt a conversational style in dealing with the questions, even if this means reducing the number of questions put.

The production team will invite you to join them for a drink after the programme.

Content?



B. INGHAM

28 October 1983

PRIME MINISTER

29/10

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH



28 October 1983

Dear John,

I enclose a set of briefing notes which have been prepared for Sir Geoffrey Howe's use in public discussion of Grenada over the weekend. These may be useful to other Cabinet Ministers if asked about the Government's attitude to various issues raised by the problem of Grenada in the coming days.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to other Cabinet Ministers.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

GRENADA

HMG's approach up to US intervention

- (i) Actively followed events from coup (13 October) and murder of Bishop (19 October)
- (ii) Aware from Friday 21 October that small East Caribbean states (OECS) favoured military intervention. Informed by Adams (Barbados - not a member of OECS). No written request from OECS until 1700 Monday 24 October.
o then no letter.
- (iii) But good reasons for thinking military intervention unlikely.
- US told us on 22 October they favoured proceeding 'very cautiously'.
 - Main Caribbean body (CARICOM) on 23 October came out in favour of economic/political measures against Grenada - but no agreement on armed intervention.
 - Visit of Deputy High Commissioner to Grenada on 22/23 October: British subjects 'in no immediate danger': Governor General did not mention any request for intervention.
 - Grenada junta put out statements promising balanced Cabinet, good relations with neighbours, including US
- (iv) Despite this:
- We ordered HMS ANTRIM to Grenada on 23 October in case need for evacuation.
 - Repeated our strong doubts to Americans on Monday 24 October.

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Consultation with US

- (i) Reagan seems to have made a tentative decision late on 23 October that US might respond. A "'semi-final decision'" to commit US forces at 1930 GMT on 24 October. Final directive at 2200 GMT.
- (ii) Reagan told PM at 1915 on 24 October that he "'was giving serious consideration'" to OECS request. At 2300 he said he had decided to respond. Message and phone call from PM around midnight but US already going ahead.
- (iii) Have told Americans consultation was inadequate. They accept this. As close allies can differ without rancour or harming defence cooperation.

Justification of Intervention

- As a matter of law, states are entitled to act to protect lives of citizens.
- As to facts, our citizens "'in no immediate danger'". US citizens in different situation (1,000, more conspicuous therefore more vulnerable). For US to make own case.

As to other objectives (democracy, constitutional government and security) we share these.

HMG's Line in Parliament, UN etc

- We disagree with US and OECS on justification.
- But didn't want to make task of US/OECS forces more difficult
- Concerned to avoid public row with US ally.

This distinct British judgement led to distinct British position at UN (where we abstained) Our doubts shared by other Caribbean countries (Trinidad, Guyana, Bahamas, Belize)

The Way Ahead

Aim must be elections, suitably supervised. Need for

- Interim administration
- Law and order

Primarily a matter for Grenada and neighbours. HMG consulting in Commonwealth, which may have significant role.

Governor General

Representative of HM Queen, as Head of State of Grenada.
No formal link with HMG. We neither received nor transmitted any request from him for military intervention.

Comparison with Afghanistan

Completely different. US/OECS intervention to protect foreign citizens and restore constitutional government.

VOTES FOR BRITONS RESIDENT ABROAD

Line to take

We agree that British Citizens who go abroad to work, who pay UK taxes and who clearly intend to return should have the right to vote. We are consulting the other political parties about exactly who should have the right to vote and we hope to issue a White Paper setting out our proposals early in the new year.

Background note

The Home Affairs Select Committee's Report on the Representation of the People Acts was published in April 1983. It recommended that British citizens resident in other member states of the European Community should be given the right to vote in the constituency where they were last registered as electors or where they retain a residential property. Other recommendations included an increase in the parliamentary election deposit and an extension of absent voting arrangements to electors away on holiday.

2 The Parliamentary Under - Secretary of State, Mr Mellor, announced at the party conference that the Government had decided to introduce, if possible next session, a major Representation of the People Bill dealing with the Select Committee's three main recommendations and that the political parties represented in the House of Commons should be consulted about the detailed proposals. The Home Secretary expects to write to the Labour and Liberal parties, SDP and Plaid Cymru on Friday, 28 or Monday, 31 October, and the Scottish and Northern Ireland Secretaries to the Scottish Nationalist and Northern Ireland parties. A White Paper in the form of a reply to the Select Committee setting out the Government's proposals would then follow early in the new year.

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3 The Home Secretary has proposed to his colleagues that an extension of the franchise to British citizens resident abroad should be limited to those previously registered as electors (or under voting age when resident here) and that they should be able to vote only for a period of ten years after departure from the United Kingdom. Ministers have not yet reached a conclusion on whether the right should be limited to British citizens resident in the EC or extended worldwide.

Home Office
London SW1
27 October 1983

UNITED KINGDOM IMMIGRATION POLICY

Line to take

The Government is committed to firm but fair immigration control, which is in the interests of good race relations. At a time of high unemployment it is obvious that we cannot accept an uncontrolled number of people.

The Immigration Rules are applied without regard to race.

The Government is firmly opposed to compulsory repatriation.

The British Nationality Act 1981 has not adversely affected the immigration position of anyone lawfully settled here.

Under the new Immigration Rules made this year all British citizen women have the same right to be joined here by their husbands.

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PHONE-IN WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ON BBC EXTERNAL SERVICES

POINTS TO MAKE

1. BBC External Services: a valuable national asset. In many ways unique in the world. Government will do what they can to increase their effectiveness. Money available for broadcasting is limited - new or expanded services can only be funded by reducing other services.
2. Cuts: not true that we are continually cutting back on money to External Services. Grant-in-aid has been maintained in real terms despite pressure for economies throughout the public sector. BBC have almost invariably been granted inflation proofing. In the 1983 exercise to reduce public sector cash limits, BBC had to find only £0.5 million from its current budget - a very much smaller amount pro rata than that sought from other Government-funded activities. Regret that certain services had to be reduced in 1981 but that was to facilitate a capital programme to improve audibility. BBC still broadcasts in 37 languages. Never any question of reducing the 24 hours-a-day (English-language) World Service.
3. Audibility: top priority is to improve overseas audibility. New £100 million capital programme agreed in 1981 to ensure replacement of ageing equipment and provision of new facilities (transmitters, relay stations, satellite feeds) to raise audibility, particularly in those areas where reception is difficult. Government providing the lion's share of the new money required. When completed (around 1990), it should ensure Britain's place in the top league of international broadcasting for the next decade.
4. Government's Role/BBC Editorial Freedom: despite being paymasters of External Services, Government's role is limited to prescribing services - languages and hours of transmission. BBC receive briefing from FCO but have total editorial freedom, as do British newspapers etc. They do a first-class job and have an unrivalled international reputation for presenting news and current affairs honestly and without bias. The pattern of broadcasting needs to be flexible to meet changing circumstances overseas.
5. Listenership: hard to measure accurately: in many countries surveys not permitted or impractical - in others, samples are small and infrequent. Much depends on whether assessment is of what BBC call 'regular listeners' (ie at least once a week) or those who listen up to once a year - the latter is not very meaningful. Evidence suggests that, where audible, BBC broadcasts enjoy wide listenership.

PHONE-IN WITH THE PRIME MINISTER - INDIA

POINTS TO MAKE

1. Indo-British relations flourishing. Met Mrs Gandhi recently in New York. Look forward to meeting her again in Delhi during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting end of November.
2. Also look forward to meeting Indian Foreign Minister, Mr Rao, this week when he attends unveiling of Mountbatten Statue.
3. Trade good, likely to approach £1000 million this year. Largest net bilateral aid programme. 25% of all British bilateral aid goes to India. Reflects importance we place on relationship.
4. Festival of India 1982 enormous success. Series of major events in Britain. Greater awareness of India and her achievements, ancient and modern. All age groups interested but mass involvement of school children particularly encouraging.
5. Interest in things Indian still growing. After success of 'Gandhi' film other films in making - TV programmes, many books. Thus impact of Festival continues.

ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. Relationship with India in past two/three years warmer than for some time. Prime Minister visited India in April 1981. Mrs Gandhi paid a highly successful return visit to London March 1982 for opening of Festival of India. Two Prime Ministers met briefly New Delhi September 1982 and New York September 1983 in margins of Mrs Gandhi's UN Summit. Prime Minister will meet Mrs Gandhi at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in New Delhi, 23-29 November.

2. Frequent Indo-British official and Ministerial contacts. The Minister of State for Industry and Information Technology and the Minister of State at the Home Office visited India in September. Indian Foreign Minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, will visit Britain 1-4 November for unveiling of the Mountbatten Statue. He will call on the Prime Minister on 2 November. Indian Defence Minister, Mr Venkataraman will visit Britain 6-10 November.

3. Close cultural links prominent during Festival of India which ran from March-November 1982. Mrs Gandhi, joint patron of the Festival with the Prime Minister, took a close personal interest. Originally intended to be confined to visual arts, Festival programme eventually included extensive series of major exhibitions, performances and other events reflecting many aspects of Indian civilisation and achievements, ancient and modern. Large numbers of schools/colleges involved throughout Britain. Many influential Indians expressed pleasure at Festival's success. Mrs Gandhi known to have been particularly gratified. Film "Gandhi" released 1982 made considerable impact in UK. Other films on India now being made.

4. India important to Britain as export market. 1982 UK exports to India were £805 million and imports from India £379 million. British companies have won a number of valuable contracts for large scale projects - power stations, coal mines, etc. Particularly noteworthy the £240 million Rihand Super Thermal Power Station contract won by Northern Engineering Industries following discussions between Prime Minister and Mrs Gandhi March 1982. Other large scale projects in prospect, notably modernisation of the Durgapur Steel Plant originally built by Britain in the 1950s. Also substantial defence sales: Jaguar, Sea Harrier, Sea King.

5. India receives the largest proportion by far of UK bilateral aid

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(roughly one quarter) and Britain is India's largest net bilateral aid donor. All British aid since 1975 has been in form of grants. India is also a major recipient of World Bank and European Community Aid Funds, in addition to benefitting from other international aid agencies to which UK makes substantial contributions.

6. The level of British aid for 1982/83 and 1983/84 was agreed between Mrs Gandhi and the Prime Minister in 1982 at £105 million and £110 million respectively. In fact Britain gave about £110 million in 1982/83 including an additional Aid and Trade Provision (ATP) grant of £5million. The aid programme includes projects of industrial importance to both India and the UK in coal, power, railways, oil and fertilizer sectors. British aid funds also assist agricultural, housing and public health projects.

NOTE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

TREATMENT OF OVERSEAS VISITORS

The National Health Service is basically for people who live in this country. People who come to work or settle here can of course use the NHS, and so can expatriates who are working abroad but retain links of residence with this country. But visitors who have been here for less than 12 months may have to pay NHS hospital charges.

There are exemptions. For example, UK State pensioners and people from the European Community and other countries with which we have reciprocal Health Care agreements receive free treatment for needs which arise during a visit. And treatment provided in Accident and Emergency Departments and for some communicable diseases is free. We only charge visitors for treatment who come from countries who charge British visitors to their shores.

If you want further details ask at the British Embassy or High Commission, or at the district health authority if you are in the UK.

BACKGROUND NOTE

Regulations on NHS charges to overseas visitors came into force on 1 October 1982, replacing previous guidance to hospitals which was haphazardly applied. The new scheme provides for clearly defined and fair procedures to identify patients who are liable to pay.

Visitors who are liable to pay should take out adequate insurance cover (as we do when travelling abroad). A copy is attached of the leaflet "Medical Treatment in the UK - Charges to Visitors" which has been issued to British Embassies and High Commissions.

**Medical treatment
in the UK –
Charges to visitors**

**Les soins médicaux
au Royaume-Uni –
Frais à payer par
les visiteurs**

**Tratamiento médico
en el Reino Unido –
Costos pagaderos
por los visitantes**

العلاج الطبي في المملكة
المتحدة -

نفقات العلاج على زوار البلاد

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NOTE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

UK SOCIAL SECURITY PENSIONERS ABROAD

Speaking note

United Kingdom pensioners abroad can receive annual uprating increases only if they are in another EC country or a country with which we have a bilateral social security agreement which enables increases to be paid.

Successive Governments have taken the view that our social security system is designed primarily for people living in this country. The cost of increasing pensions falls mainly on contributors and employers here and it would be unreasonable to ask them to bear the cost of increases for people who have left the country. It should also be borne in mind that many of the people concerned also receive a pension from the country in which they have chosen to live, so that their British pension is not their only source of income.

The Government keep this policy under regular review but, given the current need for restraint on public expenditure, we have no plans to change the situation.

UK SOCIAL SECURITY PENSIONERS ABROAD

Background Note1. Numbers of pensioners abroad receiving increases

At 31 December 1982 there were approximately 307,000 people abroad receiving United Kingdom retirement or widow's pensions. Of these, approximately 121,000 received increases under EC regulations or bilateral agreements.

2. Countries where increases are payable

Pensions are payable at full UK rates in all EC countries (including Gibraltar) as well as in Guernsey, Jersey, Sark, the Isle of Man, Austria, Cyprus, Israel, Malta, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and Yugoslavia. Pensions are payable at "partially unfrozen" rates, that is, beneficiaries receive increases awarded since the relevant agreement came into force, in Bermuda, Jamaica, Mauritius, Portugal and the USA.

3. Cost of unfreezing pensions

To pay all pensions abroad at the rates which would be payable in this country would cost £132 million a year at November 1983 rates. In the countries with the largest number of beneficiaries, the cost would be: £63 million in Australia; £31 million in Canada; £17 million in New Zealand and £8 million in South Africa. It would cost £13 million in the rest of the world. The cost of "partial" unfreezing, that is, paying increases from a current date only, would build up more slowly from about £8½ million a year.