



10 DOWNING STREET

Mr Whitmore ✓  
ML  
26  
Evan PA

From the Press Secretary

26 February 1982

Dear David,

I don't often complain and I don't want to get a reputation for doing so. But having failed to get you on the 'phone today, I thought I ought to let you know I feel rather badly used by today's story of a Government probe into the Amersham sale.

At 12.55 you reported "a top level Government inquiry". This was repeated at 1.00 pm and at 3.00 pm you reported that a full report into the affair had been ordered by Mrs Thatcher.

What I said at Lobby at 11.00 am was that inevitably there would be some kind of inquest involving the Treasury and Energy with the latter in the lead. The Prime Minister had not called for any inquiry but would no doubt see any report that was produced. It was common form in these circumstances to take stock and try to draw lessons.

In short, the whole tenor of my briefing was to play down the idea of an inquiry. Yet what we got on tape was a top level inquiry ordered by the Prime Minister.

I feel bruised, especially as my people tried at least twice with yours to get it put right.

Yours sincerely  
B. Ingham

B. INGHAM

David Chipp, Esq.,  
Editor in Chief,  
Press Association.