



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

Prime Minister

1. The press, while giving prominence to the Palace story, is generally very sympathetic of your position. I attach an example. Our policy of dignified silence is paying off.

2. Ian Gow rang last night to express his support.

3. Tristan Gard-Jones rang to say [redacted] - who has good

Police contacts - had been told that  
the views expressed ~~was~~ in  
the Sunday Times bore no  
resemblance to those of the  
person concerned.

C D P

# Daily Mail COMMENT

## They would be fools to gloat

WE ARE asked to believe that 'sources close to the Queen' have felt duty bound to reveal to the Sunday Times reporters not merely hints of her concern about the Commonwealth but a whole laundry list of her worries over how the country has been governed during the Thatcher years.

Of course, the Queen has views of her own and unrivalled experience from which to derive them. Mrs Thatcher and her predecessors in Number Ten Downing Street would be mugs not to avail themselves of such advice. But the crux of this relationship between Monarch and Prime Minister is that it should be utterly confidential.

For the Queen's 'close advisers' to blab to the Press what they claim the Queen thinks about her Government would be to blast to smithereens that trust.

You do not have to be a Sherlock Holmes to deduce that there is something very odd about the Sunday Times story.

Think about it for a moment. If, as Queen, you were desperately anxious to heal the rift between Margaret Thatcher and the other Commonwealth leaders, the very last thing you would do is to have publicised a litany of your supposed doubts about the Prime Minister's handling of previous crises ranging from the miners' strike to the American bombing of Libya.

Why throw grit into the works if you are genuinely trying to oil them?

It doesn't add up.

Either these unnamed and allegedly 'close' advisers to Her Majesty are being very stupid or they are being unpardonably mischievous.

Labour and other opponents of Margaret Thatcher tempted to exploit this caricature of a deepening rift between a 'caring' Monarch and an 'uncaring' Prime Minister, should be warned.

This is treacherous ground. If royal authority can be used and abused by those who should know better to discredit a Tory administration, then with what unscrupulousness might it not be invoked to sabotage a future Socialist Government?

Whoever planted this trouble-making story in the Sunday Times, planted weeds which if encouraged to grow could choke the glories of our Crown and Constitution.

## Tough training

HE HOPES he has not let down his fans.

He certainly did not do that.

Frank Bruno is a lovely man and a class boxer. He gave the dreaded Wither-spoon (the name more redolent of Whitehall farce than bone-crunching) a great fight.

Big Frank can put this one down to experience... though it has to be said that, when it comes to learning the hard way, being battered into semi-insensibility by the world champion must rank as the hardest.

He has all the courage and the punches and the fitness. What those punishing eleven rounds could help to coach him into acquiring is that one missing attribute somewhat alien to his open-hearted hammer-and-tongs temperament: Cunning.

This time Frank Bruno gave his all. Next time, he should know when to keep a little in reserve.

THE week of the Royal Wedding seems a particularly inappropriate moment for what has the makings of a serious constitutional crisis. But, make no mistake, the Sunday Times article has momentous constitutional implications.

It said that the Queen's close advisers had let it be known that she was dismayed by many of Mrs Thatcher's policies and that she considered the Prime Minister's approach often to be uncaring, confrontational and socially divisive. It specifically mentioned the miners' strike, allowing British bases to be used in the bombing of Libya, and the possible break-up of the Commonwealth.

There are four possible explanations for the article.

● That the Queen did indeed intend that her views should be known — though perhaps not expressed quite as forcibly as appeared in the Sunday Times.

● That her 'advisers'—who?—have taken their own initiative and publicised the Queen's private views against her wishes.

● That the Queen has expressed no such views and that these 'advisers' advance them in the hope of adding weight to their own political opinions.

● That the Sunday Times made it all up.

## Private

Since we may at once dismiss the fourth explanation, we have to look at the other three and ask, simply, who are the guilty men and when are they going to resign?

Clearly somebody has to, otherwise the monarchy could be involved in a constitutional question at least as serious as that of 50 years ago. After all, Edward VIII only abdicated because he wanted an unsuitable Queen. He was not trying to politicise the monarchy.

(Although Stanley Baldwin's fears that he might were at the heart of a private comment in 1941 that 'it's marvellous how the right person always turns up in a crisis'... 'You mean Winston?'... 'Good heavens, no. I was thinking of Mrs Simpson.)

The intriguing question, of course is who are the 'advisers' who gave 'several briefings'.

If they were Palace officials, the case against them is straightforward since they clearly have no understanding of the role of a constitutional monarch and are wholly unfitted for their posts.

The Sovereign's role is to listen and learn and—just occasionally—offer advice. But it must be in confidence.

The Queen's father, for example, offered Clement Attlee the advice that the Labour government was proceeding too fast with its programme in the late 1940s and was alienating the public. Whether that view was right or not must be a matter of opinion.

## Arranged

What is not in doubt is that it was offered confidentially and only leaked out some years later. Had George VI arranged for 'advisers' to brief the Press then the monarchy would have become highly involved in party politics. And there would have been a substantial body of opinion in the Labour Party—and not just on the far left—calling for a Republic.

The advice or views allegedly offered to and about Mrs Thatcher suffers from specific dangers. One is that the comments are so gratuitous.

The miners' strike is over. As for Mrs Thatcher's supposed failure to 'care', voters can register that message for themselves, if they want to, through local elections, by-elections, opinion polls and through letters to their MPs.

Another problem is that to take up such a position in the run-up to the election would be, on the part of the monarch, nothing



The Queen could become involved in a constitutional question as serious as that of 50 years ago

Sanctions row grows • Gulf with Palace widens • US backs Thatcher  
**Queen dismayed by 'uncaring' Thatcher**  
How the Sunday Times reported the claims

# Guilty men behind the Queen



by ANDREW  
ALEXANDER

printed that the Rt Hon So and So—according to sources close to him—is thinking of resigning because he is fed-up with X, Y or Z.

When challenged in public, the minister can insist that he is at a loss to understand how such a thing came to be written. In any case, he is on excellent terms with his colleagues etc. etc. But the message, of course, has been conveyed.

## Foolish

The Queen's 'message' about Mrs Thatcher looks so like one of those nods-and-winks efforts, except that in this case the points have been made with the sort of vigour which suggests that it was not a very professional 'leak'.

What was supposed to be 'background'—the Queen's fears about Mrs Thatcher's taste for confrontation—has been turned into the substance of the complaint.

It would be foolish to think that this row can now fade away. Short of it turning out that these 'advisers' are nebulous figures with no proper standing—always a possibility, I suppose—it is clear that heads have got to roll.

Certainly, if the leak was unauthorised then the resignations must be swift. And that, most people will hope, is where it will rest.

If, on the other hand, it was a planned leak, then many people will take a new and very critical look at the institution of the monarchy. Not even Queen Victoria, the last monarch who pursued an active political role, would have thought it tolerable that she should publicly undermine her own Prime Minister in this extraordinary way.

The matter cannot be allowed to rest.

short of a constitutional outrage.

This is not a party matter. It would be just as bad if the Queen had briefed the Press in 1978 about her views of the shortcomings of the last Labour government.

It is significant, in passing, that the specific issue which—allegedly—brings the whole matter to a head is South African sanctions. It would be hard to think of a topic which demonstrates more emphatically the division between ordinary people and the metropolitan 'chattering classes' (including the BBC, with its total obsession with South Africa).

As MPs' postbags witness, many ordinary people are puzzled by all the fuss.

The Queen has allied herself (supposedly—as we must go on repeating) with the metropolitan chatterers, not with ordinary people. Several things make it difficult to dismiss this episode as a piece of confusion or misunderstanding. One is that this is not the first time that 'the Palace' has been said to be out of line with the Government on South African sanctions.

Lord Whitelaw is said to be one source for this information

and its careful dissemination to the Press. Poor, simple Margaret Thatcher! She will go on believing against all the odds that 'dear Willie' is as loyal as he claims to be.

It causes some of us older hands much amusement.

Another difficulty is that we are dealing with 'advisers'—plural. A journalist who can find one such adviser prepared to rubbish the Prime Minister supposedly on the Queen's behalf has struck gold. To find two or more—that goes beyond mere luck. It suggests careful organisation at the Palace end.

In any case, the whole episode has all the signs of a piece of news management that has got out of hand.

## Improper

For those uninitiated in the ways of the world, let me explain. Government ministers and the like habitually 'leak' a view which it might otherwise be embarrassing or improper to state explicitly in public. 'Sources close to...' are quoted by suitably selected and carefully briefed journalists.

The message can then be

‘This cannot fade away—some heads have got to roll’



10 DOWNING STREET

Two more examples  
of how your  
arguments have  
gained ground

CDP  
15/7.

## Daily Mail COMMENT

### Our Monarch and their dirty games

**THE QUEEN** is in an awkward position. And it is some of the Commonwealth leaders who have deliberately put her there.

They are trying to pressurise Margaret Thatcher through the Queen. That is what the boycott of the Commonwealth Games is about.

The Queen with her exemplary devotion to the ideal of a multi-racial Commonwealth of nations is scheduled to grace next week's games in Edinburgh with her presence. She is the one who would be hurt if most of the athletes with black or brown skin were ordered not to attend—that is the calculation.

What really threatens to make these friendly games so dirty is this unscrupulous attempt by Commonwealth presidents and prime ministers to transform a sporting gathering into a theatre of royal embarrassment.

This tactic is utterly to be deplored. It is as ungrateful as it is unfair.

For nobody has done more than the Queen, as head of the Commonwealth, to sustain this unique, unlikely and most exasperating of international clubs. Without her it is doubtful whether it could have survived.

This is the thanks she gets. To have her good will exploited. To be cast by Commonwealth politicians (many of them notoriously undemocratic) for a role, which if she played it, could inflict on Britain the most serious and right royal constitutional crisis for half a century.

We may be sure, however, that the Queen with her long and unrivalled experience understands just what is going on. She is too wise to be manoeuvred into a conflict between Crown and Government over economic sanctions against South Africa.

The declared policy of Her Majesty's Government towards the deepening tragedy in South Africa is honourable, consistent and convincing.

Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey Howe abominate apartheid and all it stands for. They want to see it dismantled with the minimum of further bloodshed. They are having one more go at negotiating with President Botha. They remain profoundly sceptical of the impact of economic sanctions, believing that they would be either ineffective or counter-productive. But they do concede that if the Boers will not negotiate then some further measures may have to be taken.

What could be more reasonable than that?

Of course, as the Prime Minister and the Cabinet weigh the options for the future of their policy, they will have to consider the Commonwealth and the Queen's concern for it. But they will have to consider many things—not least, for example, the malign effect economic sanctions would have on unemployment of black and white in South Africa and on white and black here, where the dole queues still remorselessly grow.

They are the elected Government. Theirs is the responsibility. Theirs the decision—until voted out of power.

That is how our constitutional democracy works.

Her Majesty does not need to be told that. Interfering Commonwealth tinpots do need to be told—and in no uncertain terms.

Why Labour's last giant doesn't care how often he changes his mind

# Two faced Healey

**THERE** is no sadder sight in politics than a good man who sells himself cheap. In the House of Commons debate on South Africa this week we had to watch Denis Healey do it again.

He puffed himself up with moral indignation. He hurled abuse at the Prime Minister, calling her ignorant and complacent, 'an assiduous acolyte of the Botha charm school'.

He accused Mrs Thatcher of trying to destroy the Commonwealth with a policy adopted because firms which give the Tory Party funds do some business with South Africa.

But it all signified nothing. It was just another cynical performance from a politician who is becoming a caricature of himself.

Many years ago, at the start of the War, Denis Healey was assigned to counting troops on Swindon station. He counted some and made up the figures for the rest. Then he discovered that a railway official entrusted with the same task was making up his statistics, too.

That tells us quite a lot about the likeable, entertaining but untrustworthy Mr Healey.

## Struggle

The sad truth is that Denis Healey will now do or say anything which suits the political needs of the moment and which might help him grab back a little share of power if a Labour government should come to office again in the twilight of his political career.

Denis Healey has the best intellect on Labour's Front Bench. His experience is unrivalled. He is the last of Labour's Big Men. Had he chosen to wave the moderate banner and to fight at the right



by  
**ROBIN OAKLEY**

time the SDP might never have broken away from Labour.

*But he didn't fight then and he is not fighting now. He has given up the struggle for Labour's soul and in the process, surely, he has given up his self-respect.*

On South Africa, Mr Healey is blown. Mrs Thatcher scuppered him with a quote from the Crossman Diaries confirming that he had urged the Labour Cabinet to sell arms to South Africa—and an even more red-faced Healey than usual could only sit mute in reply.

Delving a little more, she quoted Mr Healey's comment of July 7, 1976: 'I do not believe that a policy of general economic sanctions would be in the interests either of the British people or of South Africa.'

Yet that is precisely what he is now calling for and scorning Mrs Thatcher for refusing.

But then, if consistency is the refuge of small minds, Denis Healey is surely the giant of our times.

Take Denis Healey on



ILLUSTRATION: DAVID SMITH

defence. For years as Defence Secretary he fought to keep Britain a nuclear power.

In September 1981, he said he would refuse to serve in a Labour government backing unilateral disarmament.

He insisted that 'removing American bases and staying in NATO is contradictory'.

## Scourge

Today he sits happily in a Shadow Cabinet pledged to unilateralism and to the removal of U.S. bases, which claims that it can do that and yet stay in NATO.

*On the Common Market, Mr Healey has been in favour, then against, then in favour again.*

He is now the most vocal scourge of what he calls Mrs Thatcher's 'sado monetarism'. He calls for more spending and more borrowing. But he himself was the first monetarist Chancellor.

It was Mr Healey who said on February 25, 1976: 'We cannot

go on living on tick like this. We must steadily cut our PSBR as recovery gathers strength or the Government will be pre-empting savings that industry will desperately require.'

Now Mr Healey backs a Labour Party committed to £24 billion of extra government spending which would be financed largely by borrowing.

*Denis Healey looks heavyweight. He sounds plausible. But his only undoubted political skill these days is a facility for finding the words to cover his constant changes.*

I like Denis Healey. At times I have admired him. He would certainly be among my ten desert island politicians. But at the moment his conduct in the Labour Party reminds me only of the heckler at a Russian political meeting.

As the party bigwig ranted on, a voice shouted out: 'And where were you during the years of Stalin's purges? What did you do to stop them?'

The party chief shouted back: 'Who said that?' And there was a silence in which you could hear a pin drop. 'Now you know what I was doing.'

That is what Denis Healey is doing, too, in today's Labour Party. And that is why he can froth away for hours on South Africa without it counting for a jot.

Friday July 18 1986

# Sir Geoffrey's chances

"MY MISSION is not easy but it has a chance." So said Sir Geoffrey Howe, the British Foreign Secretary, in the House of Commons on Wednesday before setting off for talks on South Africa with Mr George Shultz, the US Secretary of State. There are several more stages of the mission to come. Sir Geoffrey will see Mr P. W. Botha, the South African President, twice before the end of the month. The British Government will then have to have a position to put to the meeting of a group of Commonwealth leaders in London at the beginning of August.

All sorts of other exchanges are taking place in the meantime. British emissaries have been in Australia, Japan and South Africa itself. Discussions within the European Community go on all the time. No less important, some of the Commonwealth members have been holding meetings of their own: the African front-line states, for example. Presumably some intensive thinking is also taking place in Pretoria.

It is the interplay of all these forces that matters. Can the world outside South Africa come together to persuade the South African Government to initiate the radical political changes that have so far been contemplated in Pretoria, but not implemented? How far will the rest of the world—the Commonwealth in particular—quarrel among itself while trying to bring about the reforms? And what happens if, in the end, the South African Government refuses to budge?

The broad conditions and the time-table were set out in Mrs Margaret Thatcher's statement to the House of Commons on July 1 after the meeting of the European Council in the Hague. The conditions include the unconditional release of Mr Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress, and other political prisoners, the lifting of the ban on the political parties, and the opening without delay of negotiations between the South African Government and the leaders of the black people in South Africa. In the event of non-compliance—a harsh word, but an accurate one—the European Community is committed to consider further action on sanctions by around the end of September and to hold discussions with other

industrialised countries whose participation would be essential: the US and Japan, for instance.

In the past fortnight or so Mrs Thatcher has sometimes seemed to have relaxed from that position, putting more emphasis on her abhorrence of sanctions than on The Hague agreement. No doubt she had the perfectly honourable motive of trying to preserve the unity of the Conservative Party. Almost certainly she thinks that the threat of sanctions is likely to be more productive than sanctions themselves. Possibly she knows much more about the internal discussions of the South African Government than is public knowledge.

## *Sternest warning*

Nevertheless, her statement of July 1 stands. It was confirmed emphatically by Sir Geoffrey in the South Africa debate on Wednesday. If his mission does not procure "tangible and substantial progress," the Foreign Secretary said, he "would regard agreement on some further measures to be necessary."

That is the British position. It is the European position. There is no reason why it should not be the American and the Japanese position. Indeed, the involvement of the US in the complex multi-lateral diplomacy over South Africa must be the sternest possible warning to Pretoria. It was US interests which took a lead in the disinvestment campaign, which set up the Sullivan code for giving better conditions to black workers; and it is the US Congress which is keeping up the pressure for change. It is almost inconceivable that the US would fail to comply with a European request for further sanctions. It might even ask for more.

None of that means that the whole course of future action must be settled at the Commonwealth meeting in two weeks' time. It would be extremely foolish if some Commonwealth leaders were to threaten to walk out just as what could be a coordinated programme is coming into being. It is already mildly irritating—and no help to the image of the Commonwealth in Britain—that some countries have withdrawn from the Commonwealth Games. The need now is for unity. There is a strategy and a timetable. It should be given a chance.