

PRIME MINISTER

YOUR INTERVIEW WITH DAVID FROST

You are to give a one-hour interview to David Frost for TVAM from 1015 on Friday morning.

A make-up girl will be standing by from 0945. Charles Powell and I will be available to brief you from 0915.

David Frost is flying back overnight from New York for the interview. We shall check with him for last-minute thoughts about the shape or content of his line of questioning.

The interview will be done in the White Room against the background of their own Christmas tree which they are bringing in. Yours is too big to move out of the Blue Room.

Throughout Frost has maintained that his objective is to have a relaxed, wide-ranging discussion of domestic and world issues and his list of potential topics is in line with this:

- the future of British politics
- your initiative on the environment
- the role of Government and the private sector in creating a "kinder, gentler Britain"
- prospects for peace in Northern Ireland
- the defeat of terrorism (at home and worldwide)
- arms control - is the Cold War over?
- whither Europe? Your vision of the next ten years
- the US budget deficit

- next moves in the Middle East
- what can be done about South Africa?
- the implications for the world of Japan's growing strength
- your personal philosophy and priorities

There is more than enough here to fill two hours and Frost may not get round the whole of the course he has set himself.

The fact remains that, relaxed chat or not, what he wants is to make the news both here and in the United States.

(NB: the interview will be broadcast on NBC's breakfast TV show on three successive days after TVAM's first airing on New Year's Day.)

Consequently, I expect the interview to fall into two distinct parts - that primarily of domestic interest and then the international aspects of his agenda, some of which will have both domestic and international news appeal. There are enough clues in his format to know what he is likely to be about - namely, to challenge the nature and style of your government after ten years.

His interest in the restrictions on direct broadcasting by terrorists and their supporters and the so-called right to silence, and respective roles of government and private sector in looking after the needy, point to his domestic preoccupation: to put to you the proposition that this is an increasingly authoritarian and harsh government which is content to see the underclass relying largely on private charity.

You will recall that on the previous occasion he interviewed you for TVAM he put to you the idea that people were then describing you as "that bloody woman" (since when, incidentally, they have re-elected you). This time I would

expect him to challenge you with the idea that people are saying your government is going too far; is changing British society too much; and that you are not Conservative but radical to the point of revolutionary and that you do not care much for personal freedom - the sort of critique that Ted Heath and the well-healed behind the ludicrous Charter 88 and Samizdat movements would make.

I personally hope that Frost does justice because it would provide you with a wonderful opportunity to rubbish all this nonsense: (see Annex 1).

Finally, on the domestic front, I would expect him to come over all smarmy at the end and look ahead to 1989 - your 10th anniversary; your becoming a granny, as he will put it; your 30th anniversary as an MP - and to question you about your plans for the future.

International

So far as the international scene is concerned he will want to pitch things forward:

- your views about Bush (to whom Frost appears close) and how he should deal with his deficits;
- when you expect Gorbachev to reinstate his visit and his prospects of reforming the Soviet Union
- the outlook in the Middle East, especially in view of the interpretation put on your letter of congratulations to Shamir
- when will you visit South Africa?
- European Community: are you likely to have been yourself increasingly isolated in 1989 on monetary union, open frontiers, social space? |

Briefing on the domestic scene is at Annex 1. Charles' international briefing is at Annex 2.

C.D.P

b.p.

(BERNARD INGHAM)

28 December 1988

DCAAQT

PRIME MINISTER

cc Mr. Ingham

INTERVIEW WITH DAVID FROST: FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE

You are doing an interview with David Frost on Friday. Bernard will let you have briefing on domestic issues. This note deals with foreign affairs, defence and Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland

David Frost will ask how you see the future and the prospects for peace. He will also ask about limitations on the right to silence and restrictions on access to the broadcast media, on which he claims there is great concern in the United States.

On the future, I think you should put the emphasis on a long haul. We are utterly committed to the defeat of terrorism and will not be intimidated out of Northern Ireland. The best testimony to that is the countless acts of individual heroism by members of the Armed Forces and the RUC. The Government have taken quite a number of additional measures to step up pressure on the terrorists: for instance to attack their sources of finance and to ensure that they serve longer sentences for their crimes. We are also trying to enlist greater co-operation from the Irish Republic, from where many of the terrorists operate. There has been some improvement but there is room for more; in particular the Irish Government's new extradition arrangements are clearly inadequate. They must now honour their pledge to make them effective.

Fighting terrorism must be the first priority. Meanwhile the Anglo-Irish Agreement continues and should give the minority community greater confidence about its status and rights. That has also been the purpose of the measures we have taken on Fair Employment. We would like to see more progress on the political front towards devolution. But none of the constitutional parties has yet been willing to engage in

serious discussion. But you were encouraged by your own recent visit in the feeling that ordinary Unionists now realise that the Anglo-Irish Agreement does not represent any threat to them.

One thing must be absolutely clear: Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom and will remain so, as long as that is what the majority want. It is quite clear that the majority do want to remain part of the United Kingdom. If necessary, there might be a new border poll to remind everyone of that central fact.

You are not reconciled to a future of continued bloodshed. You are determined that terrorism will be overcome, however long it takes, and that people in Northern Ireland will be able to lead the normal life they richly deserve. They have contributed enormously to the United Kingdom, above all in two World Wars.

The terrorists on the other hand are the lowest form of criminal life: bombing the war memorial service at Eniskillen, brutally beating to death the two corporals, killing and maiming wantonly, having no regard for the lives of anyone - women, children, old age pensioners. That fact needs constantly to be reiterated: they have the vote, they have the right to stand for election, but because they cannot get what they want by normal democratic methods, they resort to murder and destruction. There is nothing romantic or heroic about them and you would like to see any remaining ambivalence about the IRA in the Republic of Ireland, in the United States and even in this country finally eliminated.

On the right to silence, the measures taken by the Government do not remove or infringe an accused's right to silence. An accused person still cannot be obliged to say anything. Nor is refusal to answer questions in itself grounds to establish guilt. But in certain clear circumstances, a court is allowed to draw inferences from a refusal to answer questions, for instance about the reasons for an accused person's presence at

a particular place, or about particular marks or substances on his clothing. There is nothing abnormal in this: there is already a similar provision in the Irish Republic; and we are taking action to change the law not just in Northern Ireland, but also in Great Britain.

As regards restrictions on access to the media, the point to understand is this: people find it very offensive after some major terrorist act to hear on their radio or see on their television screens those who support, condone and justify violence. What right do they have to be treated on exactly the same footing as those who obey democratic rules? You recall the case of the mother of the young airman who was killed by the IRA ("Where is the freedom of the press?" I hear them cry. "Where is my son's freedom?"). The restriction does not affect indirect reporting: and it mirrors very closely a similar restriction in the Irish Republic. Yes, sometimes we do have to place some restriction on the freedom of a very few people in order to defend the freedom of everyone.

Foreign Affairs and Defence

On foreign affairs you can speak of the prospects for a very different world order in the last decade of this century. There will still be many dangers, for instance from terrorism or from new countries acquiring nuclear weapons. But we can look to greater stability and less confrontation between East and West, and perhaps also to the settlement of some of the long-running conflicts elsewhere in the world.

The first point to get across is the reason why we face this more hopeful prospect. It is because we stood firm on the basic values of freedom, peace and justice and were prepared to defend them through NATO and by the presence of our own armed forces in many parts of the world. We resisted the arguments of the defeatists and the unilateralists. It is having the courage of our convictions that has brought us to this point: we must not falter now.

The second point is that communism or socialism, call it what you will, has failed as a system. It has simply not been able to produce the prosperity or the social services of the free enterprise system. It is this realization which is bringing change in the Soviet Union, and full credit to Mr. Gorbachev for recognising the need for change. But the move away from Communism and central control in the Soviet Union will be difficult and traumatic. There will be the risk of instability in Eastern Europe or even that the process can be reversed. Another reason for caution and steadfastness in defence.

The third point is the very much greater role that Britain has played in these events than at any time in the post war years. People in this country want to see Britain count for something in the world: they believe we have an important contribution to make and thanks to our economic recovery that is now happening. You see it in NATO, you see it in the European Community where we have set the agenda, you see it in the special relationship with the United States, you see it in the particular attention given to Britain by Mr. Gorbachev, you see it in our readiness to argue steadfastly for what we know to be right, e.g. over sanctions in South Africa, and be heard. And our influence is being used in constructive ways in the Middle East, in Europe, in Southern Africa, on arms control. But it all goes back to getting things right at home, shaking off the image of the sick man of Europe.

In East/West relations, we are moving away from the stark confrontation of the Cold War to a much broader and more complex relationship, with contacts at every level. The first results are clear in more emigration and the commitment by the Soviet Union to embody basic human rights in law, so that they are not just granted at the whim of government. You hope that Mr. Gorbachev will re-instate his visit very soon.

On arms control, it should be possible to reach agreement to reduce the number of American and Russian strategic nuclear

weapons without weakening the defences of either side. (Our own will not be affected as they are very few by comparison.) Negotiations to reduce conventional weapons will start: but they will be very complex and it would be rash to expect early results. The MBFR talks went on for 15 years without result. Even after Mr. Gorbachev's recent unilateral reductions, the Soviet Union will still have a heavy preponderance of conventional weapons. The important thing is that we are about to start negotiations at last with the aim above all of removing the Soviet Union's ability to mount a surprise attack on Europe. The proliferation of chemical weapons and the difficulty of verifying any agreement will continue to make this the most difficult of arms control subjects. You are not very optimistic.

On terrorism the need is for ever more effective international co-operation, so that in the end the terrorist has no safe hiding place, together with stricter security measures at airports and indeed any vulnerable points. We are doing better in Europe, but there is a long way still to go. We shall continue to do everything possible to help the British hostages but will not do deals for their release.

On Europe, your Bruges speech set the agenda for the sort of Europe we want. (Its five points were: willing and active co-operation between member states, tackling problems in a practical way, the need for policies to encourage enterprise, the importance of a Europe which is open to the world and not protectionist, and the need to maintain a sure defence through NATO). Those who wring their hands and say we shall be isolated should remember that we have in the past been isolated - e.g. over our budget contribution - and won. Your vision of Europe is one in which we co-operate ever more closely in creating prosperity and higher living standards without submerging ourselves or sacrificing the powers of our own freely-elected Parliament. You believe this goal is very widely shared in Europe, whatever the poses that some other governments chose to strike.

On relations with the US, you will want to speak warmly of George Bush and the prospects for an excellent Presidency. He does not need you to tell him about the budget deficit. You are confident he will deal with it in the way of his choosing.

On the Middle East, the PLO's declarations are a step forward provided they are followed in practice. You have invited Mr. Shamir to talk. You feel that the Middle East must be given very high priority early in the life of the new US Administration - and the signs are that it will.

On South Africa, you can speak of the positive developments over Angola/Namibia and in South Africa's relations with other African countries, as well as in the much wider international recognition that sanctions will not help the situation. We need now to see those changes in the external environment matched by change within South Africa. The question of a visit by you must remain open.

In all these regional issues, the new factor is that people are ready to talk and negotiate. This will put a great premium on diplomacy and Britain is well-equipped to make a very important contribution. In some ways we are entering a decade not unlike that which followed the First World War, when people believed that differences could be resolved by negotiation and when the League of Nations was founded. We failed then and the price was a Second World War. This time we must make sure that we succeed. It will take steady nerves, a determination to maintain sure defences, and an ability to spot opportunities and make the most of them. We must not give way to euphoria, but we can be guided by hope.

I have put in the folder:

- the Anglo-Irish Agreement
- the Bruges speech
- your article on President Reagan.

C.D.P.

(C.D. POWELL)

28 December 1988

ANNEX 1Domestic Briefing

Andy Bearpark has put together (below) basic factual material on the Government's commitment to helping the needy, etc. This is familiar territory for you. So too is your concern for the environment which is another aspect of "caring".

But there remain two aspects - the allegation that the Government is going too far and its allegedly dictatorial nature - which are my main domestic concerns for this interview.

Going too far

This idea has surfaced, partly because of wider disaffection over higher interest rates and largely because of water and electricity privatisation. There is a feeling that the State should be responsible for providing these basic commodities.

I think you should seek to get over the following points:

- 25 per cent of British water supply is already in private hands;
- private generation of electricity is a fact of life in other countries;
- there is no evidence whatsoever that publicly-owned utilities are uniquely capable of providing a better service or of protecting the environment;
- privately-owned utilities cannot fall back on the State if they fail to deliver the goods; they have to maintain efficient supplies to survive;
- the water privatisation bill now going through Parliament is in itself a major measure to protect and enhance the wider

environment.

Authoritarian government

I suggest you make the following points

- your approach to government has been to be strong in those things only governments can do - defend the realm, protect the value of the currency, provide a safety net for the weak - and to get off the peoples' backs so that their self-reliance and enterprise are given full rein;
- this approach has transformed Britain - and while drastically reducing direct taxes and eliminating government borrowing has allowed a vast increase in social spending, notably on health and welfare;
- your concern is to make Britain a country fit for consumers to live in; previously it was entirely producer-oriented, as the activities of trade unions to the exclusion of concern for the customer so painfully underlined.

To achieve this requires not the centralisation but the devolution of power - for example, to the individual trade unionist instead of the union boss; to the home and share owner both of whom are vastly increased in numbers in the last ten years; and to the parent in relation to control over his children's school

- economic and political freedom has never been greater than in Britain;
- freedom of expression in and through the media has never been greater this century - so free in fact that there is a growing concern in Parliament about the abuse of that freedom;
- the Government is seeking to narrow the protection of official information and to put the Security Service on a statutory basis - not the actions to be expected of an

authoritarian, dictatorial government;

- nor is it stopping the reporting of comment by terrorist organisations or their supporters; all it is doing is denying them, as the Republic of Ireland has done for ten years, direct access to radio and television;

- nor for that matter is it ending the terrorist's right to silence - all the Government is doing is allowing the courts to take that silence under questioning into account in weighing all the facts in reaching a verdict;

- so much then for the preposterous claims from those champagne Socialists behind Charter 88 and Samizdat who have rightly been laughed out of court in the media.

PRIME MINISTER

DAVID FROST INTERVIEW

You are to give David Frost a one-hour interview at 10.15am tomorrow. Briefing has already come forward on the domestic and international issues which he is likely to raise.

However, Bernard thought you should also be aware of the attached article by Bernard Levin, from the Times, Boxing Day edition - see Annex A. It is critical of the Government for being secretive and dictatorial on a number of issues.

David Frost rang this morning. He wants to raise Lockerbie and has asked whether you would prefer to deal with it at the beginning of the interview or in the context of the discussion of terrorism. Since the announcement yesterday that there was conclusive evidence of high explosive among the wreckage - see attached statement at Annex B - we have been taking the line in conjunction with the Department of Transport, Home Office and Scottish Office that as it is now the subject of a criminal investigation it is not appropriate for Ministers to comment in detail on the incident and its implications. Department of Transport have provided brief lines to take following yesterday's announcement - see Annex C.

You may wish to mention it in the context of the discussion on terrorism, making the point that no effort must be spared in tracking down the perpetrators and bringing them to justice and by reaffirming your determination to stand fast against terrorism. You could also mention your feelings on visiting the site of the disaster last Thursday.

Sarah Charman

SARAH CHARMAN
Press Office

December 29, 1988

ANNEX A

Deliver us from this season of despair

I have never been of the school which insists that the world is going to hell in a handbasket, partly because I am not at all sure what a handbasket is, but much more because it has always seemed to me that the optimistic stance is the only one worthy of any civilized and intelligent person. But when we actually look at the world and its present condition we can hardly deny that there is much plausibility in the claim that we are on an irreversible slide to damnation, and most of us are going there pig-ignorant and in a bad temper.

Before the pessimists rally, let me do some of their work for them. As this year ends, I own to a feeling of much more than unease at the daily corruption of power that I see in our country. A government with no opposition that it needs to take seriously will inevitably grow arrogant, and arrogance is but a step from the conviction of certainty, and the conviction of certainty is inevitably followed by the belief that enemies are hatching conspiracies everywhere, and such paranoia must lead to self-pity, whereupon self-pity turns into arrogance and the circle is complete. You want examples? You shall have them.

How few years ago is it that the constitutional outrage embodied in his housing association trick would have had Mr Nicholas Ridley out on his ear, propelled by most of his party, before the end of the afternoon of the day he introduced it? New rules mean that council housing may be taken over by housing associations, but

only if there is a majority for such action among the dwellers involved. In order to avoid the embarrassment of such proposals being defeated, thus implying that the tenants think that it is a lousy idea (which would amount to disbelieving the Government's claims), Ridley has rigged the ballot. If the Noes have it, all those who didn't take part in the vote, though entitled to, are counted as having voted Aye. Neat, what? And done, of course, within the law. Yet not long ago, certainly not much more than a decade, the man who organized such a scam would have been characterized as a crook as surely as if he had made off with the Crown Jewels.

And the new Official Secrets Act? (O God, runs any sensible man's prayer, protect us from a Home Secretary who nurses ambitions). It, too, would until very recently have been torn up and thrown in Hurd's face by his own side, and for the right reason too — that apart from some adjustments to the contracts of members of the security services, its purpose is to ensure that those in political authority can lie to us with impunity whenever they feel like it, and at all times conceal from us things that we need to know and have a right to know. But this attitude has not come into being spontaneously; it has a cause, and the cause is worse — much worse — than the effects, for it is that those in authority do not trust us. What kind of a democracy is it that must call on the guns of dishonesty to disarm the people?

Gloomy thoughts these. And a gloomier. Britain's reputation for

willingness to take in refugees from countries which persecuted them once stood as high as any in the world; at times higher than any. But it is, or should be, a matter for shame that our record on refugees is now among the world's worst. The infamous measure that gave to airlines — airlines! — the duty and the right to turn back refugees; the rule that before refugees can be certified genuine they have to produce papers obtainable only from the authority which is persecuting them; the offshore hulks to which would-be refugees were sent, like victims of the slave trade, while their applications, carefully delayed by those charged with processing them, were dealt with, *pour encourager les autres*; these are stains that cannot easily be wiped away, but go on seeping into the fabric and rotting it.

It is not surprising that many people, disturbed by such trends, and rightly despairing of Labour on the left and alphabet soup in the centre, have stepped back from the immediate political struggle to argue in a somewhat more detached manner and to exchange views in a less heated environment. And just as I was pricking up my ears at such potentially interesting and fruitful news, I discovered that the organization set up for the purpose described, and the magazine launched with a separate but complementary aim, were called respectively Charter 88 and *Samizdat*.

If people can do things like that, there is no point at all in asking them whether they are ashamed of

Bernard Levin



themselves; by the very doing, they automatically convict themselves of being incapable of understanding what they have done.

But that need not inhibit the rest of us from telling them. *Samizdat* will be filled not by hunted heroes but by some of the richest, greediest and most self-satisfied writers in this country, whose slightest utterings (which are slight indeed) are constantly vied for by editors of newspapers and magazines. And for their comfortable squealings these people have stolen a name which has led those who use it to imprisonment, torture and death. Brave lads! Brave lads!

I have met men who have published real *samizdat* at, lit-

erally, the risk of their lives. One of them told me, quietly and calmly, what the "wet sheet" torture consists of, and he was in a good position to know, because it had happened to him. The victim is stripped naked, and wrapped in a soaking canvas shroud; as the fabric dries, it crushes him tighter and tighter, till not just movement, but breathing itself, approaches the impossible. Others escaped such suffering; they were "only" sacked from their jobs, exiled from their homes, robbed and abused.

As for Charter 88, which is a sort of pun on the Czechoslovak underground organization Charter 77, the name is simply an indecency, and the fact that the organizers have conned two members of the real organization into

giving it their blessing makes it a greater indecency, not a lesser. The Czechoslovaks, in one respect, suffered more than any of the other states of the Soviet empire; even the Hungarians after 1956 were not obliged to do anything except shut up and obey orders, but the Czechoslovaks after the spring of 1968 were compelled to denounce and vilify that brave, glorious, tragic adventure in heroism and truth, and thousands who refused were hounded incessantly for years, many of them into their graves, while others survived only as broken men.

Yet Charter 77 gave notice to the darkness that they owned the dawn, and that however long they had to wait they would one day switch it on. Now contemplate

those who thought it would be terribly, terribly smart to call themselves Charter 88; do they not know that the men and women who founded and worked for the real thing suffered for their faith, and that their suffering was a great deal worse than getting a bad review in the *TLS* or not being invited to Nigel Lawson's Christmas drinks?

These two odiously-named enterprises serve remarkably well to put into perspective the genuine doubts and apprehensions that trouble so many people in Britain today. But the fact that terrible things happen elsewhere is no excuse for the fact that bad things happen here, and we had better not try to hide our shame behind the real evil of others. *Corruptio optimi pessima*.

EMBARCO : 4.30pm ANNEX B

28 December 1988

STATEMENT FROM THE AIR ACCIDENTS INVESTIGATION BRANCH: LOCKERBIE

A number of items of wreckage, passenger baggage, and part of the framework of a metal luggage pallet are being examined by MoD scientists. More items have been collected by AAIB investigators from the accident area; each of these will be subjected to lengthy chemical and metallurgical forensic examinations.

However, it has been established that two parts of the metal luggage pallet framework show conclusive evidence of a detonating high explosive.

The explosive's residues recovered from the debris have been positively identified, and are consistent with the use of a high performance plastic explosive.

Other evidence collected by the AAIB, in particular that from the flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder and from the wreckage trail on the ground, has led to the preliminary conclusion that the explosion took place soon after the aircraft had crossed the Scottish border whilst it was in the cruise at 31,000ft and that this led directly to its destruction.

Much investigative work remains to be done to establish the nature of the explosive device, what it was contained in, its location in the aircraft, and the sequence of events immediately following its detonation.

Night line : 276 5999
in hours : 276 0888

DEFENSIVE BRIEFING

Q Why has it taken till now to identify the cause of the disaster?

A The investigation has been carried out remarkably quickly. There were a number of possible causes. It has taken time for the investigators to collect the evidence to sift through it, and to have the necessary forensic tests carried out on it.

Q What has clinched the identification of the cause?

A Forensic tests carried out yesterday and today for the AAIB by the Royal Armaments Research and Development Establishment at Fort Halstead, which linked the explosion with traces of high-performance plastic explosive.

Q Is security for US airlines adequate at UK airports?

A We regard all flights by US airlines as meriting special protection in the UK.

We took immediate action after the crash to ensure that our requirements were being observed by US carriers.

We have reviewed the security arrangements for flights by US carriers in the light of this incident (in consultation with the FAA) and are immediately directing US airlines to take additional measures in the UK, in particular in relation to hold baggage. We understand the FAA are also considering further security requirements for US airlines worldwide.

We do not reveal the details of security procedures.

Q What is being done to find out how the explosive was put on board?

A The Metropolitan Police are already investigating all the circumstances of the handling of this flight at Heathrow, including whether security requirements were complied with.

Q What about the adequacy of the security measures in force at Heathrow at the time? What about the Department's handling of the warning that was given?

A Ministers will be considering urgently what further inquiry, beyond the police investigation, will be necessary and appropriate. Clearly everything possible must be done to identify the causes of this disaster and to draw lessons for the future.

PAN AM 103

Points on Government response:

- Security measures at airports already tightened. Not right to give details which only help the terrorists. Our record is good.
- We shall obviously need to consider further tightening of such measures, including both more rigorous searches and more sophisticated technical equipment, at least for flights and airlines considered at risk. There are penalties in terms of longer check-in times and delays. They may have to be confronted.
- These steps could be ^{combined} ~~considered~~ with an initiative to strengthen security at airports internationally.
- finding those responsible for the PAN AM bombing will require a coordinated international effort. There is already good cooperation with European and American police and intelligence forces. We shall be looking for similar cooperation from authorities in the Middle East. Any government or organisation which has information should pass it on. Our aim is to bring those concerned to justice.
- We must also try to improve pre-emptive intelligence about possible terrorist attacks. This too requires international cooperation - already much improved in Europe through the Trevi group, but capable of being strengthened with other countries.
- Is this not just locking the stable door after the horse has bolted? No, you can never devise an absolutely fool-proof system of detection, particularly as advances in technology make explosives ever harder to detect. We already have good security, tailored to the level of

threat, and are constantly looking for ways to improve it further while making it possible for people (like Mr. Frost) to travel without too much inconvenience.

- We have already approached the Czechoslovak Government to urge them to adulterate Semtex to make it more easily identifiable. They should be placed under constant pressure to comply.