

PRIME MINISTER

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FINANCIAL TIMES INTERVIEW - EUROPE

I promised you a note for the above in the light of the treatment of Strasbourg in the Sunday press and the line being taken by tomorrow's daily newspapers.

I have found the media today rather unable to make up their minds about your role at Strasbourg, and this has given me the opportunity to fill the vacuum.

You may care to follow the line below in tomorrow's interview:

"In some respects, your position in relation to the EC is that of a dog who has been given a bad name.

How did your negative, ^{awful} angry squad reputation come about?

For two principal reasons:

the five-year battle to end Britain's excessive contribution and so heal a running sore in our relations with the EC - bringing £10 billion back to Britain by the end of next year; and

your effort, almost single-handedly, to reform the CAP which has rescued the EC from bankruptcy and put it handsomely in the black.

In other words, about three-quarters of your time as Prime Minister has been spent in the EC on bruising campaigns, the success of which were essential if the EC was to be put in a position to advance.

Having achieved those objectives, you then threw your energies behind the further integration of the Community in an intensely practical way - the completion of the single internal market.

The crucial business of completing the single market is a pretty boring diet for the media compared with the excitements of 'Britain isolated' on an IGC and the Social Charter.

The IGC and the Social Charter are largely symbolic at this stage but they do start a major debate about the kind of Europe to be built in the future - a democratic, free, enterprising, open, flexible, and a diverse Community - or a bureaucratic, regulated and centrist EC. You will be in there working for the former.

You don't have a negative bone in your body. You are positive and constructive with a clear vision of the kind of Europe you want and, more to the point, the kind of Europe which you believe, on the basis of the British experience, is the one most likely to increase prosperity, influence, and the attractions of Europe.

Such an approach is not anti-European. It is pro-European. And what is more, it is bang in line with the successful enterprise policies pursued at home."

I have found that this has gone down very well, particularly with The Times and Daily Telegraph, and I hope it will be reflected in tomorrow's papers. But it will be all the more effective if you could say something similar to the FT. We need to kill the idea that you are negative about Europe.

B. McInnes

AP BERNARD INGHAM

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