



Prime Minister

Mrs. Chalker has been invited by Ian Green to take part in a seminar on lobbying. She clearly had

Ref. A085/1667

MR BUTLER

*Yes - I agree with some doubts about it and asked me whether she should agree to do so. Sir Robert Armstrong thinks that she would be unwise to do so. Agree that I should pass on this advice to Mrs. Chalker.*

Thank you for your minute of 17 June about the invitation to Mrs Chalker to give an address on how Government reacts to lobbying at a seminar organised by Business Research International on how Government works and how to approach the Civil Service.

*PERB  
19.6*

2. As you say, there is nothing in the rules that precludes acceptance. But I suspect that this type of invitation was beyond the powers of imagination or prediction of those who prepared the rules. I think we have to start from first principles.

3. Essentially the seminar is on how to be successful in lobbying the Government, and in particular the Civil Service. Lobbying is a fact of life, which we have to live with. But it is controversial, we don't exactly approve of it, and we go to some lengths to tell civil servants how to behave in relation to it. Is it really acceptable for a Minister to appear in semi-public to tell lobbyists how best to go about bending the ears of civil servants (and no doubt of Ministers too)? I should have thought that Mrs Chalker would lay herself - and the Prime Minister, since she is being consulted - open to political criticism best avoided, if she accepted the invitation.

4. It is not as if a Minister currently in office is uniquely qualified to make a contribution to such a seminar from Ministerial experience; nor as if this is strictly public business.

5. I am afraid that I think that Mrs Chalker should be advised to say that this is an invitation she should decline. I am not at all enthusiastic about the idea of her taking it on, subject to clearance of the text: that would give the practice of lobbying a cachet, and anything she said a degree of authority, which I do not think we should welcome.

*REA*

19 June 1985

ROBERT ARMSTRONG



MS2 AQH  
bcR+A

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

20 June 1985

We had a word on the telephone about your letter of 12 June enclosing one from Ian Greer inviting you to take part in a seminar on lobbying.

This is the first time that I can remember a Minister being invited to take part in a conference on this subject. Since the activities of these lobbying consultants are controversial, I thought that I should have a word with Sir Robert Armstrong and the Prime Minister about it. Both feel that you would lay yourself open to political criticism, which would be better avoided, if you were to accept this invitation. It is not as if a Minister currently in office is uniquely qualified to make a contribution on this subject - Mr Greer could find other people qualified to speak on it - and the involvement of a Minister would give these activities a cachet which would not be particularly welcome.

The combined view therefore of the Prime Minister and Sir Robert Armstrong is that they would prefer that you did not accept this invitation.

fed

Mrs Lynda Chalker, MP.

sfw

BEMAQQA



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

I enclose a copy of a letter from Mrs. Linda Chalker, Minister of State, Department of Transport, asking whether there is any objection to her taking part, at the request of Mr. Ian Greer, in a seminar organised by Business Research International on how Government works and how to approach the Civil Service. Mrs. Chalker is asked to speak on 'Lobbying' and the Government's reaction to it.

I should be grateful for your advice on this. I can see no reason within the rules why a Minister should not take part in a seminar on this subject, but the activities of lobbying organisations - of which Mr. Greer's company is a leading example - are controversial and Mrs. Chalker's participation would give this activity some increased recognition. Perhaps the most important thing is what Mrs. Chalker will actually say about the Government's reaction to lobbying, and perhaps I should suggest that she clears her remarks with you?

FRB

17 June 1985



From: Mrs. Lynda Chalker, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

12 June 1985

Robin Butler Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1

Dear Robin

I have received the enclosed letter from Ian Greer asking me to take part in a conference.

I would like to take part in this and am just checking that I have full clearance to do so.

Yours sincerely  
Lynda Chalker



IAN GREER ASSOCIATES  
Public Affairs Consultants

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Telephone: 01-630 5651 Telex: 296438 IGAUK G

→ ANGELA  
→ No. 10 (Robin Butler)  
for agreement to  
participate

28th May, 1985.

Mrs. Lynda Chalker, MP,  
Minister of State,  
Department of Transport,  
2, Marsham Street,  
London,  
SW1P 3EB.



Dear Lynda,

I hope you are feeling a great deal better than you were when we last met. I cannot imagine that the pace has eased up to allow you any real opportunity to rest.

I have been approached by Business Research International, a conference organisation, who are anxious to arrange a seminar on the 2nd December at the Cavendish Conference Centre, London, on lobbying. It is a one day seminar covering how Government works and how to approach the Civil Service. I have been asked to approach you in the hope that you might feel able to speak on how Government reacts to lobbying. I can think of no one better. Is it something you would be prepared to do?

At present this topic is scheduled for the afternoon session albeit I am sure it can be changed if it is more convenient. They are also approaching Sir Douglas Wass and Lord Melchett as possible speakers during the course of the day.

Perhaps you could give me an indication as soon as possible how you feel about the idea.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

IAN B. GREER.