

1 - Mr Powell

cc Mr Wicks

2 - PRIME MINISTER

MEDIA IN MOSCOW

You endorsed my earlier minute on your approach to the media on the 'plane and in Moscow and I attach it for convenience.

This note seeks clearance for interviews at the end of your visit immediately after your press conference.

I am sure you will wish to give the usual BBC radio and TV, ITN and IRN interviews. We may also have a request from Adam Bolton, of TV-AM, whom you like. But the important point about breakfast TV generally is that all your morning events up to noon will be meat and drink to them and may well go out live. This underlines the importance of giving the media something to work on early in the day.

Over and above the usual four (or five, including TV-AM) interviews, we have requests from Peter Sissons, Channel 4, whom you also like and did an excellent interview with you at the EuroParliament in Strasbourg; and Charles Wheeler, of BBC Newsnight - a perceptive chap who is a big improvement on Peter Snow.

This list of interviews will give you a heavy workload at the end of the Moscow leg but it will serve your domestic purpose if, as expected, the visit is a real success.

I have one further request and that is to give an interview to the BBC Radio 4 Today programme before you go to Tbilisi. You will of course be otherwise engaged from 8.30 that morning, but you could give John Humphreys (John Timpson's successor) five minutes at, say, 8am.

It goes without saying that I could arrange interviews for you as circumstances require at any time during the trip, but I think your interests will best be served by comments on the road, as it were, up to the press conference. The only reservation is that you might want to say something in Zagorsk, though I think you will be best advised not to get involved in formal, setpiece interviews before your talks with Mr Gorbachev.

I am of course operating on the basis that you do not intend to give interviews to foreign broadcasters (apart from your Russian interviewers). There is huge interest in the USA but your best interest will be served in looking after your position at home.

Finally, there is a lengthening queue of media wanting to interview you after the visit. I think your best interests would be served by giving priority to:

Press:

Express (Nick Lloyd and Paul Potts)

Mail (David English and Gordon Greig)

~~Independent (Peter Jenkins) on the basis that you need to address that type of SDP opinion~~

Times
Radio/TV

Panorama (which you have not done for a long time)

J Y Programme

Content to:

- AS also*
- 1 - give the usual radio and tv interviews at the end of the Moscow leg, plus Channel 4 and BBC Newsnight?
 - 2 - to give BBC Radio 4 Today programme an interview at 8am on the final day?
 - 3 - to confine interviews to the British media on the basis that your priorities are domestic now?
 - 4 - to give time on your return for effective follow up with a balance of interviews between popular and and more serious journals/audiences? (NB The Express should have priority because they have had a request in for a long time)
- Very fully*
Yes
Yes
mt

[Signature]
B Ingham

March 24, 1987.

PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO RUSSIA - MEDIA

This note deals with two aspects of your visit to Russia - broadly how you should approach to media during the visit; and what you might do next week by way of media interviews before you go.

THE APPROACH

This will be one of the great media events of your Prime Ministerial office. There is massive interest: we know that there are at least four times as many British and foreign journalists travelling out to Moscow independently as the 24 who will be on your 'plane.

This is not simply because of the heightened domestic political interest in the visit. It was always going to be a mediafest. But a combination of the forthcoming election, your relationship with a debilitated Reagan and with a magnetic Gorbachev, an expectation of an arms control deal and the human story inherent in dissidents and Jews, plus the photoappeal of many aspects of the tour, make it a dream of a story in journalistic terms.

It may not however be a dream of a story to cover. The Russians can be very difficult with the media and we shall have to watch this. We shall set out to be as helpful as possible. Tiresome though the media can be, it will also serve your interests to go out of your way to help them without appearing to be blatantly electioneering.

I shall do you a separate minute next week when we have the benefit of Mike Horne's recce but I would make a few points now:

- your speech at the Central Council will set will set a tone; you are going to Russia with a clear purpose: to promote the cause of peace with security; that will assist you in handling the media in the run up to the visit;

- I am very anxious indeed that you meet the media on the 'plane and so give them confidence, right up the last minute, as it were, on how you are approaching your tour. But I have one other reason for wanting you to adopt a relaxed approach to the media: Mr Kinnock is getting a very bad reputation for standing apart from and ignoring the media on tours. I am sure you can

score by way of contrast.

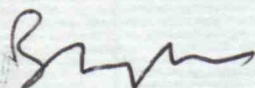
- The important thing during the tour will be to give radio and TV a good quote between 10 and 11am so that you can dominate early morning radio and TV. (We shall be three hours ahead)

MEDIA NEXT WEEK

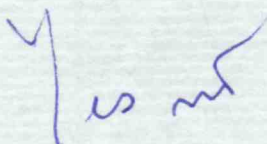
You normally are not keen to give media interviews in advance of a visit and, given the media's endemic drive to put a negative gloss on anything, there is no reason to give them the chance next week to do so. You will get quite a bit of coverage in France and Germany on Monday and I shall brief all the media on Thursday, along with FCO officials. In addition we can get some useful publicity for the publication of your itinerary on Wednesday on the eve of Mr Kinnock's visit to the USA.

In all these circumstances, and given your TV broadcast in Moscow, Charles and I think you should leave your first encounter with the media next week, after Caen and Bonn, to the flight to Moscow.

Content with this approach?



B Ingham
March 19, 1987.



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