



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

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*From the Private Secretary*

14 April 1989

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 31 March about the Information Forum. She would be ready to see you to discuss it early next week. I have suggested 1200 on 17 April.

Charles Powell

The Lord Rees-Mogg.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 April 1989

*Jean Charles,*

London Information Forum

With your letter of 3 April to me you enclosed a copy of Lord Rees-Mogg's letter of 31 March to the Prime Minister. We have always been aware of the risk that sectors of the Press might take the opportunity of the London Information Forum to criticise the ban on broadcasting Sinn Fein et al. We have suggested that the Prime Minister try to defuse this by referring to it in her speech - an approach the Home Secretary has endorsed. Lord Rees-Mogg may well allude to these views in public. But we do not believe that he will try to embarrass HMG by what he says. Nonetheless, the Foreign Secretary thinks it might be useful if the Prime Minister were able to have a brief word with Lord Rees-Mogg, either before the Forum opens (which would need to be on Monday 17 April: he is out of London this week) or, if this is not possible, fairly early in its proceedings.

/ I enclose a draft reply to Lord Rees-Mogg.

*Yours ever,*

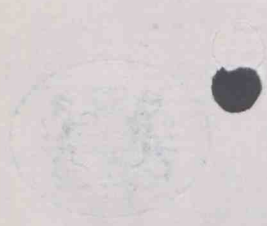
*R. H. T. Gozney*

(R H T Gozney)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street

Soviet Union :- Human Rights

Pg 2



DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:

Reference

PRIME MINISTER *cm*

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Your Reference

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Copies to:

Top Secret

The Lord Rees-Mogg

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

*co b b k o*

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

*No AM can asked in*

..... In Confidence

Thank you for your letter of 31 March about the Information Forum. *Se* would of course

CAVEAT .....

*very ready*  
be delighted to see you to discuss it, before it begins early next week. *1. have suggested*  
*1200 on 17 April.*  
~~can be in touch with my office to arrange a suitable time.~~

*Q*

Let us by all means also discuss the Government's policy on access to the broadcast media by Northern Ireland terrorist organisations and their apologists. I know that there is some criticism of this policy. But I am clear that these steps were a necessary part of our fight against terrorism. And I believe that we enjoy broad support in taking forward this fight.

Enclosures flag(s) .....

The key issues raised by the London Information Forum are of course quite different, both in principle and in scale. The societies of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have long been characterised by severe

/restrictions

restrictions on those freedoms which we in Britain have long taken for granted. We are determined to work for those basic freedoms in Eastern Europe. That is why we have made our attendance at the Moscow Human Rights Conference conditional of the Russians implementing legislation which will guarantee them. The Information Forum addresses one of the most fundamental freedoms of which the peoples of Eastern Europe have long been deprived, the freedom of information. Mr Gorbachev's reforms, his advocacy of glasnost, provide a unique opportunity to increase that freedom. I discussed this with Mr Gorbachev last week. We would be failing to take advantage of the great possibilities offered by glasnost if we did not aim both to test and develop it at the Information Forum. I hope our delegation at the Information Forum can help in this historic process.

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DA

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

Acad 3 April 1989

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from Lord Rees-Mogg.

BR II

I should be grateful for early advice and a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature.

(C.D. POWELL)

Richard Gozney, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

dar



→ cc BI

**United Kingdom Delegation to the CSCE London Information Forum**  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
London SW1A 2AH

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1

~~SOP 012~~

Proc 6  
21/3

31 March 1989

*Dear Prime Minister,*

I am very glad that you have agreed to open the Information Forum. I believe it will be a positive occasion, with freedom of information improving rapidly in the Soviet Union, Hungary and Poland, if not in the other Eastern European countries. I feel honoured to lead the British delegation.

As you know we have chosen a balanced delegation, with Neal Ascherson as the leading - and responsible - journalist of the left. The individual delegates are free to make criticisms of British information policy. I learn from the Chief US delegate, Leonard Marks - a warrior from the old Lyndon Johnson days - that there have been attempts, which he has rebuffed, to get the US delegation to criticize British practices.

I am however anxious about the almost unanimous professional concern among serious journalists about the present climate of Government press relations. I am not referring to Bernard Ingham matters, which are different. There is a price in good will for every injunction, and the Sinn Fein ban is almost unanimously regarded as ineffective. In freedom of information terms it is damaging because the broadcasters report on the restrictions in the same terms they use of South Africa.



If you had a moment to discuss these matters before the opening of the Forum I would be delighted to call on you.

Congratulations on the success of your African tour. That has had an excellent press here - and well deserved.

Yours truly,

William

REES-MOGG

P.S. I am writing on my last day of seven years at the Arts Council - I sent my last official letter yesterday, and it happened to be to Nigel.

SOVIET UNION: Human Rights A2

