PRIME MINISTER

Sunday Telegraph

You have agreed to give Peter Simmonds, the new Political Correspondent of the Sunday Telegraph, an on the record interview for up to an hour from noon tomorrow (Friday). You will recall that you had intended one of your first interviews to be for the Sunday Telegraph but that Ivan Rowan fell ill last year. Since then, Mr. J. W. Thompson, Editor of the Sunday Telegraph, has reinforced Peter Simmonds' request for tomorrow's interview.

The purpose of the interview is to carry further the campaign to achieve a steady reform of public attitudes and, in the Sunday Telegraph, to rally your supporters and give them some material to argue your case with.

You have, of course, given two radio interviews over the past week and Peter Simmonds will therefore be trying to take various matters a little further forward. I think the important thing is for you to try to present basic concepts in a slightly novel way.

Mr. Simmonds proposes to draw up to the front of his reportage any news point that you may give him and then to run the interview more or less verbatim. He will be recording the interview and I have agreed to his bringing along a photographer to take a quick picture of you before the interview starts.

Mr. Simmonds intends to follow this broad outline:

Northern Ireland - your forthcoming meeting with Mr. Haughey, hunger strikers, etc;

Foreign policy - he proposes to concentrate upon Poland (I have told him that you will not wish to encourage the view that the Russians will go into Poland and that, for this reason, you may not be all that forthcoming); the Government's approach to the EEC;

the economy - here his interest is really in exploring possible developments in the Government's thinking, e.g. the extent to which it may take de-indexing of benefits;

the general coherence of the Cabinet and how it hangs together as a team;

finally, unemployment: is this a big potential election loser?

I am sure that you do not need any briefing for this. From my point of view, the important thing to achieve in the 45 minutes or so available for the interview is a general impression of yourself and Government firmly in command and determined on all fronts; and to get over our essential economic messages.

B. INGHAM

4 December, 1980