

Your Interview with Dutch Television

You agreed to give a 15-20 minute interview to Dutch Television at 4 p.m. on Monday. It will be for the "Panoramiek" programme on the Nos channel, which is the nearest equivalent in the Netherlands to the BBC. "Panoramiek" is a weekly current affairs programme devoted exclusively to foreign news. It has a good reputation and a large audience. Your interview will be screened on the evening of Wednesday, 4 February, 36 hours before your arrival in the Hague.

Mechanics

The interview will be conducted in English by:-

- Peter Brusse - London correspondent of Nos;
- Bob de Ronde - Economic Editor of "Panoramiek".

A make-up girl - Dawn Alcock from the BBC, who has helped you on some previous occasions - will be available on Monday afternoon.

Purpose of the Interview

There is a great interest in you and in British policies in the Netherlands. Your interview will therefore be a useful curtain-raiser. Yours is, in fact, the first visit by a British Prime Minister to the Netherlands since we joined the European Community, although there are, of course, many exchanges at lower levels. For example, Lord Carrington, Sir Geoffrey Howe and Sir Ian Gilmour have all visited the Hague in the past year. The Dutch Foreign Minister, Mr. van de Klaauw, visited London in March, 1980.

The interview will cover three main areas - the European Community, Trans-atlantic relations and UK domestic issues, including the economy and Northern Ireland. This will give

/you

you an opportunity to put across to the public of an important European ally:-

- your conviction about British membership of the European Community;
- the importance of an harmonious working relationship between Europe and the United States; and
- your confidence in the long term prospects of the British economy.

Our Ambassador in the Hague, Sir Jock Taylor, has suggested points in these three areas which you might highlight (and in some cases avoid) in his telegram at Flag A.

There are certain other subjects about which some sections of the Dutch public feel strongly - e.g. Northern Ireland and the siting of Cruise missiles - on which there may be critical questioning during the interview.

Briefing on these and other matters is attached in a series of indexed briefs.

*Charles An*

*BT* B. INGHAM

30 January, 1981



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FM THE HAGUE 291045Z JAN 81  
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TELEGRAM NUMBER 030 OF 29 JANUARY

YOUR TELNO 19: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT: TELEVISION INTERVIEW

1. I AM GRATEFUL THAT MRS THATCHER HAS AGREED TO AN INTERVIEW WITH NOS 'PANORAMIEK'. THE FACT THAT THIS WILL TAKE PLACE JUST BEFORE THE FIRST BILATERAL VISIT BY A BRITISH PRIME MINISTER TO THE NETHERLANDS FOR MANY YEARS WILL FURTHER INCREASE INTEREST IN THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES AND BRITAIN'S PROSPECTS. THE DUTCH WILL THEREFORE BE PARTICULARLY EAGER TO HEAR THE PRIME MINISTER'S VIEWS.

2. THE INTERVIEWERS HAVE NOT YET DRAWN UP A PRECISE LIST OF QUESTIONS, BUT HAVE TOLD US THE MAIN HEADINGS THEY INTEND TO RAISE. THE OUTLINE REMAINS AS DESCRIBED IN MY TELNO 19. MY RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO POINTS WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT WISH (A) TO HIGHLIGHT AND (B) TO AVOID ARE SET OUT BELOW.

(A) THE COMMUNITY

3. YOUR HAMBURG SPEECH OF LAST NOVEMBER MADE A CONSIDERABLE IMPRESSION HERE, BUT MANY PEOPLE IN THE NETHERLANDS REMAIN SCEPTICAL - NOT LEAST IN VIEW OF CURRENT LABOUR PARTY POLICY - ABOUT THE EXTENT OF THE UK'S COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY. THE PRIME MINISTER'S INTERVIEW OFFERS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERLINE THE QUALITY AND STRENGTH OF THAT COMMITMENT, AND OF OUR DETERMINATION TO PLAY A FULL PART IN THE EC'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

4. IN THE FIELD OF POLITICAL CO-OPERATION THE MAJOR PREOCCUPATION OF THE NETHERLANDS PRESIDENCY IS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANDATE IN RESPECT OF MIDDLE EAST POLICY AGREED BY MINISTERS ON 20 JANUARY. THE DUTCH REMAIN SENSITIVE ABOUT THE ASPERSIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN CAST BY THE FRENCH ON THEIR ABILITY TO HANDLE THIS DOSSIER EFFECTIVELY. IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF THE PRIME MINISTER COULD SAY, IF TACKLED ON THIS SUBJECT, THAT WE HAVE FULL CONFIDENCE IN THE PRESIDENCY'S CAPACITY TO ARTICULATE AND PROMOTE THE POLICY OF THE TEN IN THIS AREA.

(B) TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

5. THIS WILL REQUIRE CAREFUL HANDLING. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE UNEASE IN THE NETHERLANDS, RIGHT ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM, ABOUT PRESIDENT REAGAN'S VIEWS ON A VARIETY OF EAST-WEST MATTERS, COUPLED WITH A WIDE-SPREAD FEELING THAT HIS ELECTION WILL REDUCE THE CHANCES OF EARLY PROGRESS IN THE ARMS CONTROL TALKS (TO WHICH THE DUTCH ATTACH GREAT POLITICAL IMPORTANCE) AND LEAD TO AN INCREASE IN TENSION. IN PARTICULAR, THERE IS CONCERN THAT US PRESSURE ON THE DUTCH ON NATO MATTERS IN GENERAL AND ESPECIALLY ON TNF MODERNISATION WILL BE APPLIED TOO BLUNTLY.

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6. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES ANY DIRECT APPEAL TO THE DUTCH TO FALL IN BEHIND THE OFFICIAL NATO LINE WOULD BE LIKELY TO BE MISREPRESENTED. (MANY DUTCH POLITICIANS TEND TO EMPHASISE WHAT THEY REGARD AS THEIR FREEDOM OF ACTION ABOVE ALL ELSE) THE BEST LINE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER TO TAKE MIGHT BE TO EMPHASISE OUR KEEN WISH TO SEE THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE PROGRESS ON ARMS CONTROL, BUT TO ARGUE THAT THE BEST HOPE OF ACHIEVING SUCH PROGRESS LIES IN THE MAINTENANCE OF A UNITED NATO POSITION; AND TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF ALL NATO MEMBERS PLAYING THEIR PART.

(C) BRITISH ECONOMY

7. THE NETHERLANDS PRESS TENDS TO FOCUS ON THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF BRITAIN'S ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE. UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES AND INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES ARE RECURRING THEMES. ADDITIONAL STATE AID FOR BRITISH LEYLAND HAS BEEN WIDELY PUBLICISED. THE PRIME MINISTER MAY BE ASKED ABOUT THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAVE ADHERED TO PURE MONETARIST POLICIES (MILTON FRIEDMAN CURRENTLY HAS A SERIES RUNNING ON DUTCH TELEVISION).

8. DUTCH DOMESTIC ECONOMIC PREOCCUPATIONS CENTRE ON UNEMPLOYMENT CURRENTLY AT RECORD POST-WAR LEVELS AND STILL INCREASING STEADILY (MY TELNO 7) AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR FINANCING DEFICIT, ESTIMATES FOR WHICH HAVE RECENTLY BEEN REVISED UPWARDS. THERE ARE THUS SOME POINTS OF SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS FACING THE TWO COUNTRIES, WHICH MIGHT GIVE RISE TO QUESTIONS. ELSEWHERE THE PARALLEL IS NOT SO CLOSE. DUTCH INFLATION CONTINUES AT UNDER 7% BUT AT THE SAME TIME THERE IS A SIZEABLE DEFICIT ON THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS.

9. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THE PRIME MINISTER COULD REFER TO THE IMPORTANCE OF ANGLO-DUTCH TRADE. BRITISH VISIBLE EXPORTS TO THE NETHERLANDS WERE £3845 MILLION IN 1980, THUS MAKING THIS COUNTRY OUR THIRD LARGEST EXPORT MARKET AFTER W. GERMANY AND THE U.S. DUTCH EXPORTS TO THE UK IN 1980 AMOUNTED TO SOME £3450 MILLION.

(D) NORTHERN IRELAND

10. THIS IS A SUBJECT WHICH AROUSES MUCH INTEREST IN THE NETHERLANDS. THE TRADITIONAL DUTCH CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS HAS LED THEM TO FOLLOW DEVELOPMENTS IN N. IRELAND VERY CLOSELY. IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF, IF ASKED THE PRIME MINISTER COULD EXPLAIN

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BRIEFLY WHY THE MAZE PRISON PROTESTERS WILL NOT BE GIVEN POLITICAL STATUS, AND THE CONCESSIONS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAVE ALREADY MADE TOWARDS IMPROVING THEIR CONDITIONS. WHAT WE HAVE TO COMBAT HEREN, AS ELSEWHERE, IS A READINESS TO BELIEVE THAT WE ARE LESS CONCERNED THAN WE SHOULD BE ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF PRISONERS.

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PRIME MINISTER

4-00 - 5-00 pm m  
Monday 2 February.

Your Visit to the Netherlands : Media

Your first visit to the Netherlands as Prime Minister on 6 February will attract widespread interest from the Dutch media.

The Dutch Government have in mind a joint press conference with Mr. Van Agt at the end of the talks. Our Ambassador in the Hague strongly recommends that you also give a more wide-ranging television interview in advance of the visit.

Of the bids received from Dutch television channels to interview you, the most attractive platform seems to be the "Panoramiek" programme, a weekly current affairs slot lasting 30 minutes devoted exclusively to foreign news. It has a good reputation and a large audience.

"Panoramiek" would like a 15-20 minute interview with you which would cover three main areas:-

- The European Community;
- Trans-Atlantic relations;
- UK domestic issues, including the Economy and Northern Ireland (in which the Dutch take a close interest).

The interview would be conducted in English by the channel's London correspondent and "Panoramiek's" Economic Editor.

With "Weekend World" coming up and your diary so full, I hesitate to ask you to take on further media commitments at this time. But Michael Alexander and I share our Ambassador's view that there would be advantage in projecting yourself to a large Dutch audience in one television interview as a curtain-raiser to your

/visit.

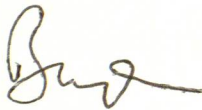
visit. The Dutch are good allies and they were, of course, very helpful to us on the budget problem. The interview would offer an opportunity to get over our views on major European and other issues at a time when the Dutch hold the EC Presidency.

If you agree in principle, the best time to record would be on Monday, 2 February for screening on Wednesday, 4 February, 48 hours before your visit to the Hague. An alternative would be next Friday, though I am unhappy about your giving an interview so far ahead.

Content, subject to satisfactory timing?

*Yes.*

I attach your diary for the next two weeks.



B. INGHAM

23 January, 1981