

Mr Ingham

The following is an account of the two telephone conversations which took place on Sunday 9 January 1983 between yourself and:

1) Mr A Protheroe of the BBC at 1840 (approx) local time Port Stanley, 2140 GMT and UK time; and

2) Mr David Nicholas of ITN at 1900 (approx) local time Port Stanley, 2200 GMT and UK time,

during both of which I was present.

1 Mr Protheroe began the conversation to which you responded vehemently on the basis that you had provided them with a signal service, by detaining the BBC crew on the Falkland Islands at very considerable risk to the Prime Minister and her party in order that the media and public would be able to have an account of the Prime Minister's arrival and visit to the Islands. You could easily, and justifiably, have let the BBC crew return to the UK but you did not. On that basis you felt deeply hurt that the BBC had adopted this childish attitude by not making the film and soundtrack of the Prime Minister's arrival etc freely available to other networks. He obviously tried to oppose this argument because you kept stressing the all important security aspect, but he was obviously totally disregarding your line of reasoning. You asked him what alternative course you could have taken to which he replied that you could have spoken to him privately about the matter. Again you repeated the security aspect and, therefore, could not have done as he suggested.

2 Furthermore, you felt that if the British public were to become aware of the way in which the BBC had dealt with this matter, they (the British public) would not believe it possible. You also stated that you had not informed the Prime Minister of this incredible situation but were certain of the reaction you would get from her.

3 You also stated that you felt you deserved some gratitude, which as yet had not been forthcoming, for the considerable risk which you had taken in detaining the BBC and, as a result of the BBC's attitude, had regrettably been forced into making the threat of not allowing the film/soundtrack to leave the Islands.

4 However, you were willing to release the material that evening only on his (Protheroe's) personal assurance that the material would be made freely available to the other networks as soon as it arrived in the UK. Mr Protheroe finally consented to do so which you confirmed twice before confirming the release of the material on that basis.

5 You then commented that you and he must have a meeting after you returned to the UK to discuss these problems as it was obviously not possible to continue in this fashion every time the PM makes a visit which is of a highly sensitive/secret nature. He agreed.

6 As a result of your conversation with Mr Protheroe you then spoke by telephone to Mr David Nicholas of ITN.

7 You informed him of your conversation with Mr Protheroe to the extent that you had expressed in the strongest possible terms that you had, on ITN's behalf, felt aggrieved by the way the BBC had handled this situation. You hoped that Nicholas did not feel badly towards yourself in this matter. After all, you had done this bearing their interests in mind. You informed him that you had stated to Protheroe that, on the basis that he had given you his personal assurance that the material would be made freely available to other networks upon arrival into the UK, you had allowed the material to leave the Islands that evening.

8 You then spoke briefly about the arrival of the ITN crew early in the following morning and gave him your best wishes.

9 January 1983



A Logan
Duty Clerk