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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

21 April 1982

Dear John

Panorama, Monday 26 April

The Prime Minister has agreed to be interviewed on the Panorama programme next week. The original purpose of this interview was to look back over the first three years of the Government's term. In current circumstances, we can obviously expect some of the time to be taken up with the Falkland Islands question, but we still expect the bulk of the interview to focus on other matters.

We have recently commissioned briefing on essential questions of economic management for other purposes, and this will not need to be updated. But I should now be grateful for very short notes on the main themes of Government performance over the past three years. We do not expect contributions from every department. We will, however, need to provide the Prime Minister with material covering both notable successes and areas which have attracted criticism. The Prime Minister will already be familiar with the main themes in most areas, and the purposes of the briefing will simply be to serve as reminders and to recall the essential facts, especially key statistics. The topics we have in mind include, for your department, law and order; and, from other departments, defence spending and priorities including Trident, European Community developments, Northern Ireland, the health service, employment including the particular problems of new entrants to the job market, housing including the right to buy, problems of the construction industry, fuel pricing and self-sufficiency, privatisation, nationalised industry performance, tertiary education. I am sure that departments will have other topics to suggest, but we should be very happy to receive nil returns from departments who do not feel their activities need be singled out in a brief retrospective look at the last three years. We should also be happy to be referred to any existing briefing - for Questions or other purposes - which is sufficiently up-to-date and concise to serve the purpose.

May I emphasise again that brevity is important, particularly bearing in mind the volume of paper which the Prime Minister is currently handling on the Falkland Islands. If in doubt about contributions, please settle for the shorter version, in the knowledge that we will be able to ask for additional information on specific questions raised by the Prime Minister in the course of Monday.

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I should be grateful if responses to this request could reach me by 1500 hours on Friday.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to Members of the Cabinet, and, for information, to Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office). I suggest that responses should be sent only to us, and not copied to other recipients of this letter.

*Yours ever*

*Mike Paltisai*

John Halliday, Esq.,  
Home Office.