

PRIME MINISTER

cc Mr. Ingham

You are to give an interview to the Editor of Ogonyok on 28 February. You will find in the folder a telegram about him from our Ambassador in Moscow. He is an unusual and rather controversial figure. The Soviet Embassy are clearly rather sensitive about your seeing him. But he is said to enjoy Gorbachev's personal favour.

The FCO letter in the folder has some suggestions for points you might cover in the interview, dwelling quite a lot on Anglo/Soviet relations.

I don't think this is right. Your "formal" interview with the Soviet press before Mr. Gorbachev's visit is with the Editor-in-Chief of Izvestia. That will take place in March, and it is then that you should set out your thoughts on Anglo/Soviet relations, on the forthcoming meeting with Gorbachev and so on.

It would be better to use the interview with Ogonyok to talk much more about your own philosophy and how you are implementing it in this country. The purpose would be to get over to its readers just how radical your policies are and how much more exciting and innovative they are than the policies of socialism (even as applied by Mr. Gorbachev), and how much more they do for ordinary people. You want to give them your vision of society and underline the enormous gap which remains between Gorbachev's perestroika and a real free society. The purpose is not to be critical of Gorbachev - indeed you will want to be supportive in your comments about him - but to widen the horizons of the readership in the Soviet Union.

In short, I think it should be quite a racy and daring interview, focussing much more on our politics and on you personally than on the normal themes of East/West relations.

C D P

(C.D. POWELL)

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