

MR INGHAM

PRIME MINISTER

INTERVIEW WITH THE STAR

You are to be interviewed by Brian Hitchen, the new editor of the Star, tomorrow morning. He has done much to improve the standards of The Star following last year's unhappy episode when it was linked for a short time to Sunday Sport. Mr Hitchen is a long-time fan of yours and the paper has become more supportive of Government since he took over. This morning the paper carried an article (attached) by Ray Mills explaining why the NHS is sick.

He will be bringing a photographer with him. The photographs can be taken in the Study before the interview begins.

He will be asking you a wide-range of questions about

1. The problems facing the NHS;
  - How do you bring outside money into the health service?
  - Does the BMA truly represent the medical profession?
  - Should not more jobs in hospitals be contracted out?
  - Should not visitors to this country pay for emergency medical treatment?

(On the last point, visitors to this country who are non-resident do have to pay for any medical treatment they receive. We have tightened up in recent years on overseas visitors. As a caring nation, however, our first concern in an emergency is to give treatment to people. We do not ask them first if they are visitors from overseas and if they are whether they have medical insurance. Once they have been treated the hospital would then make arrangements for payment to be made to the health service. We do have reciprocal arrangements with our European partners for health care but there are still differences between one country and another. For example in France the patient would expect to make some payment towards his treatment.)

2. Electricity privatisation and will it take place without a reform of the coal industry?
3. Your views on capital punishment
4. Crimes of violence and do you believe that violent criminals should not be given parole?

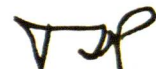
*Please see my  
28  
minute attached Annex I*

PKGS

5. Your views of "soft sentences" handed down by judges to those guilty of "horrific crimes of cruelty to children".
6. The North/South divide. I would expect Brian Hitchen's approach to be positive. He is based in Manchester and feels the North is on the verge of the biggest commercial explosion during the next three or four years, since the Industrial Revolution. Building is taking place everywhere air shuttles and trains are packed with businessmen and some London companies are drawing up relocation plans.
  - do you see a whole new feeling of excitement and growth in the North as Southern companies move there because it has become too expensive in the South?
  - can you see a time of super growth and prosperity ahead for the people of the North?
7. Israel and the Gaza Strip
8. The Falklands
9. How you view Mr Gorbachev's chances of making changes in the Soviet Union.
10. Afghanistan
11. Your greatest personal triumph
12. How you view British family life
13. How you would best like to be remembered bearing in mind that many people admire your courage; that you have restored people's pride in themselves; we are no longer the sick people of Europe; no one now laughs at our Armed Forces or sniggers about our balance of payments
14. A special message you would like to give to the readers of The Star.

Content for:

- the interview to take place in the Study?
- the photographs to be taken in the Study before the interview?



Terry J Perks  
26 January 1988

# WHY THE NHS IS SICK

IT IS time to get a few things into perspective about the Great NHS Crisis. And the first thing to recognise is that the undoubted crisis is not at all what it is being made out to be.

The real crisis is NOT about babies waiting for operations and old people waiting for new hips.

Nor is it to do with underpaid nurses (though they are, and shamefully so), or shortages of doctors, or equipment, or beds.

These are secondary symptoms of a deep-seated malignant cancer. And the real diagnosis is that the NHS Crisis has been manoeuvred into the headlines thanks to an unholy trinity of appalling mismanagement, near-derth trade unions—and hard-eyed, malevolent politics at its most cynical.

## Destroyed

The comparison with a cancer is not lightly chosen, for in this horrible affliction, the cells reproduce themselves unstopably.

And so it is with the NHS bureaucrats, for where once there was one administrator, now there are five, and there is no end in sight.

It is the bureaucrats who have criminally

squandered the £21 billion pumped into the NHS by the Tories, and who have allowed the trade unions and the politicians to turn a juggernaut into a bandwagon.

It is the bureaucrats who have all but destroyed the morale of their staffs, and—not for the first time—Norman Tebbit summed it all up when he said:

*"We hear much of lack of nurses and equipment. But I have never heard of a committee meeting being cancelled because of a lack of photocopiers or clerks to push the paper around."*

In essence, this is the crux of the NHS problem, and the world's worst management is now being ruthlessly exploited by trade unions and the beleaguered Labour party.

NUPE and COHSE are busy organising strikes by nurses, and their claptrap about not hitting the patients is enough to make the stomach heave in revulsion.

NUPE, don't forget, put Maggie Thatcher in power in the first place, for it was their "Winter of Discontent" in 1978-79—when rubbish mounted in the streets, porters closed hospitals, and the dead lay unburied—that paved the way for her victory.

## Dream

Labour, scenting a cheap and squalid vote-winner to distract from their own crises, are inciting them to do their worst, and the nurses who will foolishly march to the picket lines are both the victims of their own innumerable "officers" and the stooges for hard-Left unions and politicians.

This is the ghastly mess which Mr. Tebbit's "squealing NHS pen-pushers" have made of Nye Bevan's glorious dream.

And the Government's guilt lies only—but entirely—in its failure to clean out this festering Augean stable of self-and-time-serving "managers" who put their own interests before those of the public.



26 January 1988

PRIME MINISTER

STAR INTERVIEW

Terry Perks has done a full brief (attached) for your interview with Brian Hitchen, new editor of The Star, tomorrow morning.

This note merely seeks to elaborate on one or two points:

NHS

The whole thrust of the Lobby's interest yesterday was to identify the nature of the review, how it will be conducted, over what timescale and what it will cover.

I sought to maintain every flexibility but, while saying it was clearly going to take months, I was sure you would want to reach conclusions this year.

They sought to eliminate such things as hospital board and lodging and other charges while noting that you have changed your tune over tax incentives for private health insurance.

My line, which I think went down well, was as follows:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on.....

"Increasingly over recent weeks you have detected a shift in the political ground both, for example, in what you have been hearing from people in leading articles. Increasingly, it has been recognised that since throwing money is not necessarily the answer, new thinking needs to be brought to bear on the issue.

"Over the past week or so you reached the conclusion that the public expect you to take this tide in opinion, conduct a thorough examination and come up with proposals.

"You are ruling nothing out, notwithstanding pledges. But what you will clearly have to do in formulating proposals is to judge what is politically possible, and having taken that judgement to face the political consequences if the Government gets it wrong. You are, however, in the business of the Government's getting it right.

"The whole argument has now changed. The country's mind is now focused on how to improve the NHS and its funding. That is good."

Your purposes will be served with Mr Hitchen by encouraging him to promote constructive discussion on his paper which has strong Northern roots. But what is crucial is to make it clear to him beyond any doubt how utterly and decisively you reject the BMA suggestion that people will have to "give a guarantee when they're severely ill that they will be able to pay for their treatment before they receive it."

### North/South

Because Mr Hitchen is Manchester-based he will be very susceptible to any enthusiasm you show for the North. He clearly thinks there is a lot happening there.

I hope you could say something like:

"Nothing would thrill me more than to see the North pulsating with enterprise and success. I believe it is beginning to happen - and I believe the North is becoming ever more attractive as the South East becomes more crowded and expensive.

"The North has enormous assets - and a very good life to offer. And I want it to sing its praises more, to put its best foot forward and to welcome and encourage the enterprising and the entrepreneur.

"I hope the North believes in itself as much as I believe in the North."

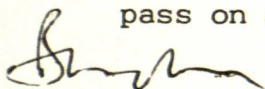
You should know that business and opinion leaders on both sides of the Pennines have come together in the M62 Trans-Pennine Club to try to attract industry to set up a base along this artery from Merseyside to Humberside. You might praise this Yorkshire-Lancashire cooperation - the clearest evidence perhaps that attitudes are on the move. It is very impressive.

You may also care to dip into the attached booklet, prepared by a Manchester firm of Stockbrokers and Granada TV, to sell Manchester and the North West.

### One Other Final Point

Mr Hitchen recently wrote to you enclosing a Technicolor story about the IRA being about to attack troop-carrying helicopters on the British mainland. Terry has the correspondence.

You might mention to him that you hope he will - indeed he must - pass on any hard evidence of terrorist activity to the police.



BERNARD INGHAM