

PRIME MINISTER

VISIT TO BBC

I received today Ian Trethowan, Director General, BBC and his new personal assistant, David Holmes, to discuss your visit to the BBC, which had been provisionally fixed for Wednesday 14 May. We are planning this on the basis of a Departmental visit - 11.30 am/3.00 pm.

2. We agreed that we should abandon 14 May - the day of the TUC "day of action" because this may denude their establishments and/or provide the occasion for a demonstration. We have now provisionally re-arranged for Wednesday 25 June.

3. Mr Trethowan has in mind the following structure, provided that you are content:

This would be unwise,

- i Visit to Lime Grove to see work on the development of a 'Nationwide' programme, including how editorial decisions are reached;
- ✓ ii Then on to Television Centre with the objective of giving you an impression of the complexity and efficiency (or otherwise) with which the BBC conducts its operations;
- iii A short pre-lunch drink with Mr Trethowan and Director of Finance for, say, 15 minutes, to give you an opportunity to raise such issues as efficiency, advertising, sponsorship etc.
- ✓ iv A buffet lunch (my suggestion) attended by the Managing Director, TV; the two Channel Controllers and 30-40 staff formulated in groups representing different activities - eg news, drama, light entertainment, education, producers, resources control etc; this would give you an opportunity to meet a wide variety of people and to raise with them such issues as editorial control; balance in current affairs programmes; manning levels; efficiency etc - as well as actually finding out how they see their jobs.

4. Are you content with this general approach?

5. You are, of course, to do the 'Jimmy Young' programme on 30 April. Mr Trethowan made a particular request that you might spend an additional 30 minutes or so after the programme (end 11.30 am) to meet BBC Radio. Caroline says the time is available. Would you agree to this, subject to your approving the programme.

Yes, but.

B INGHAM
20 March 1980.

I think the 'decides' the real issue is how the BBC ensure that its Channel responsibilities are carried out in practice. Who is responsible for seeing that there is a balance and that programmes do not offend against public taste and other

The organization for digital

Future - who does the financial contact
on what basis.

mb.

Sunday 27 April

1600	Hair Makeup Record BBC Childrens Programme	BBC TV Centre Wood Lane
	Dinner - Mr. Wyatt	

Monday 28 April

0830	Hair	No. 10
1000	Media	No. 10
1015	Chief Whip	
1045	Home Sec, Chief Whip and Chairman	No. 10
1130 - 1230	Open Twelfth Exhibition of "Art of the Invalid Child"	Courtauld Showrooms, Hanover Sq.
1300 for 1315	Lunch with Ministers	
1430	Keep free for Women's Conference Speech	No. 10
1700	Mr. James Bomer Jr. and Mr. Imrie-Brown (World President of Rotary)	No. 10

Tuesday 29 April

0930	Messrs Howe, Gow, Ingham and Sanders	No. 10
1000 - 1030	Pastor Vins	No. 10
1200	Mr. Tony Durant and Officers of Environment Committee and Mr. Heseltine	No. 10
1300	Lunch and Questions Briefing	No. 10
1515	Questions	H/C
1700 - 1815	Meeting with Provincial Editors	No. 10
1830 - 2000	Reception for Provincial Editors and wives	

Wednesday 30 April

	Keep free for Briefing	
1015	Arrive	
1030	Jimmy Young Show	
1130	Visit BBC Radio	
1930	Inner Temple Grand Night	

Thursday 1 May

0900	Chancellor of the Exchequer	No. 10
0930	Messrs Howe, Gow, Ingham and Sanders	No. 10
1030	Cabinet	No. 10
1300	Lunch and Questions Briefing	
1515	Questions	H/C

Friday 2 May

0930	Media	
1130	Present Medallions to Fellows of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust	Kensington Town Hall
1315 for 1330	Lunch: Scientists ? IRN and ITN interviews ? Nationwide	No. 10

Saturday 3 May - Monday 5 May - BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

Tuesday 6 May

	Hair	No. 10
0915	Media	No. 10
0930	Messrs. Howe, Gow, Ingham and Sanders	No. 10
1000	Keep free for Interviews	
1200	Mr. Biggs Davison and Officers of Northern Ireland Committee +S/S for N.I.	No. 10
1300	Lunch and Questions briefing	

BBC Visits

Radio

1. In my minute of March 20, you agreed to spend an additional 30 minutes or so at Broadcasting House meeting BBC radio people after your Jimmy Young programme appearance on April 30 (10.30 - 11.30).

2. Aubrey Singer, managing director, BBC Radio, has now asked if you would like to have a buffet lunch with a small group after a tour of Broadcasting House, meeting a wide variety of people at work. As of now, you are free for lunch.

3. A high level lunch would give you an opportunity to raise with radio (and subsequently with TV when you visit the TV Centre on June 25) the issues you mentioned in the attached minute - viz.

- how does the BBC ensure that its charter responsibilities are carried out in practice;
- who is responsible for seeing that there is a balance and that programmes do not offend against public taste and what is the organisation for doing this;
- who is responsible for financial control and on what basis?

4. Would you like to extend your visit to Broadcasting House to take in a buffet lunch? I suggest you might agree, provided you can leave at, say, 2 p.m. Otherwise, much of your day will be taken up by the visit.

Agreed out.

Television

5. So far as TV is concerned, you approved the BBC's suggested /programme

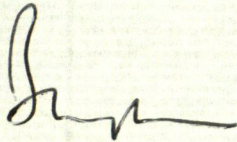
programme, as attached, with the exception of a visit to Lime Grove to see preparatory work for a 'Nationwide' programme, including how editorial decisions are reached. You minuted "This would be unwise".

6. Do I take it that you feel it would be unwise to discuss charter obligations, balance, editorial control, etc. in the context of a specific programme? I can see there are objections to this in the sense that it could be argued subsequently that the BBC had modified its line that night because of the point of view expressed by the Prime Minister. Would you therefore prefer to have a discussion, in the abstract as it were, with a number of executives and editors before seeing the BBC at work?

*Yes.
not*

*The press would present
it as if I were lying up to
interfere with the content of
a particular programme.

not.*



B. INGHAM

31 March, 1980

ARD



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Press Secretary

1 April 1980

Dear Mr. Singer,

This is to confirm my conversation with you over the telephone this morning. The Prime Minister will arrive at Broadcasting House at around 1015 on 30 April. She has undertaken to spend an hour with the Jimmy Young programme from 1030-1130. She would then very much like to meet a wide variety of people at work in Broadcasting House and would then look forward to a buffet lunch with a small number of people. She will however have to leave at 2 p.m.

I mentioned over the telephone that the Prime Minister is showing an interest in how the BBC ensures that its charter responsibilities are carried out in practice; who is responsible for seeing that there is editorial balance in programmes and that programmes don't offend against public taste; and the system of financial control. These issues, you may feel, may best be discussed over lunch.

James Ingham
B. Ingham

B. INGHAM

Aubrey Singer, Esq.

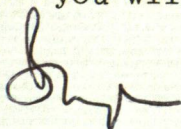
cc Miss Stephens

PRIME MINISTERJimmy Young Programme - Visit to Broadcasting House

The following arrangements have been made for your visit to Broadcasting House on April 30, primarily to appear on the Jimmy Young Programme.

- (i) You will be on air with Jimmy Young from 10.30-11.30.
- (ii) At 11.30 it is suggested that you should make a tour of Broadcasting House, having a look-in at the control room, newsroom, a current affairs programme, light entertainment and drama production.
- (iii) At 12.30 Ian Trethowan, Director General, and Aubrey Singer will take you for drinks with a small luncheon group comprising Mr. Paul Hughes, Director of Finance, Aubrey Singer, Managing Director (Radio), Peter Woon, Editor, News and Current Affairs (Radio) and David Holmes, Personal Assistant to the Director General.
- (iv) At 2 p.m. the sit-down lunch will end to allow you to leave.

As you will be going to the Television Centre on June 25, Mr. Trethowan suggests that the discussion at Broadcasting House should concentrate solely upon radio and I have said I am sure you will agree with this.



B. INGHAM

18 April, 1980