

PRIME MINISTER

"Nationwide"

You will recall that you have a long-standing invitation from BBC TV "Nationwide" for you to participate in their programme one evening. You had to cancel the appearance last year.

They have now received the request for you to appear for 40 minutes one Thursday evening at their Lime Grove Studios from 6.20 p.m.

They wanted you to appear before the Budget and I have ruled that out of court. The question remains whether you would like to take up their offer soon after the Budget on the lines originally proposed - namely, to allow invited viewers to put questions to you "on a wide range of topics" followed by a brief interview by the presenter, probably Frank Bough.

You want to do more popular television and "Nationwide" certainly offers you a large audience in the regions. I think it highly likely that the programme will concentrate on unemployment and other economic questions - notwithstanding their concept of "a wide range of topics" - and we shall have to watch very carefully indeed the political balance.

Content, however, for me to explore the possibilities of a Thursday evening post-Budget on the format envisaged above?

*[Handwritten signature]*

B. INGHAM

20 February, 1981

*Yes*

*mb*