

Box

Conservative and Unionist Central Office

F

32 Smith Square Westminster SW1P 3HH Telephone 01-222 9000 Telegrams Constitute London SW1

Chairman of the Party: THE RT HON THE LORD THORNEYCROFT

Deputy Chairman: R. ALISTAIR McALPINE

Vice Chairmen: SIR ANTHONY ROYLE KCMG MP
THE BARONESS YOUNG

RICHARD RYDER

The impact of the Prime Minister on television has been matchless. I cannot imagine a better day of television for any Prime Minister in my memory than last Tuesday in Northern Ireland. Not just the fact of going there but the overheard conversations and asides to people on walkabout and the willingness of the Prime Minister to go to people rather than expect them to come to her.

So we are not looking for television coverage in the normal sense of the word.

But the Prime Minister has yet to do a major interview on television since her Election. This would seem to be the time to do one. It obviates any criticism that she is reluctant to face interlocuters and would keep her in practice - which an important factor.

I would like, if it is possible to keep the Prime Minister out of studios. You will remember how much better street and location events are for her and studios tend to reduce everybody to the same low level.

The only opportunity for an OB of our choosing would be Weekend World on the morning of Sunday 7th October.

Is there any objection to our using Downing Street or Chequers?

Panorama have a request for Mrs Thatcher to do a 20 minute interview in the studio with Robin Day and Fred Emery on the evening of Monday October 8th. BBC News is very reluctant to do an interview on the Monday until they see if there is a news peg. The interviewer - if they did an interview at all - would be David Holmes. *Mo*

ITN would like to do a 7 minute interview on the same date and they will be prepared to record it at a location of our choosing.

I would strongly recommend one of the two ITV offers - that is Weekend World and/or ITN, but this will leave an angry BBC. Something might happen to change our minds. My instinct is to refuse the BBC. Their interviewers are hostile. They are more than reluctant to meet us half way in our requests for such things as OBs etc. It would serve notice on the BBC that they are one of the broadcasting services and not self appointed tribunes of the people.

But whatever the Prime Minister's decision we must remain flexible so that we can include the BBC if it suits us at the time. I will be available over the weekend on 370 1818 - my bathroom is being repaired at my regular flat. I shall be spending tomorrow at the Oval until 7.00pm.

GORDON REECE
31st August 1979

cc. G.R. 5/9/79

None / RR

Mo

Already Agreed in principle. RR