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24th March, 1983

Anthony Shrimmsley, Esq.,
Director of Press and Public Relations,
Conservative Central Office,
32 Smith Square,
London, SW1.

panorama in evening?
Person D-10 (Pan)

Dear Anthony,

R. Day

I am glad you were able to meet for lunch yesterday to discuss tentative plans for the General Election coverage. I think it would be useful if I summarised our discussion on paper.

My first preference would be to organise a debate between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. We would obviously have to discuss details later, but the general guidelines would be as follows:-

- 1) Both party leaders would make an opening statement of around five minutes outlining the case for voting for their party.
- 2) Under the chairmanship of someone agreeable to Mrs. Thatcher, Michael Foot and the BBC, the two leaders would then take questions from a panel of journalists.
- 3) There would be a closing statement from each party leader.

The other proposition I put to you was that Panorama would produce a series of three programmes during the Election Campaign in which we would examine the Conservative Manifesto, the Labour Manifesto, and the Alliance Manifesto. We would do this by inviting, in successive weeks, a spokesman for the Alliance to be questioned by a Conservative and a Labour MP; a spokesman for Labour to be questioned by an Alliance and a Conservative MP; and a spokesman for the Conservative party to be questioned by an Alliance and a Labour MP.

Obviously we can discuss later who your candidates for such a series of programmes might be, but what I would like to do is secure an agreement in principle that you would take part so that we can plan more effectively than last time the best way of presenting each party's manifesto before the questioning begins.

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE CAREY
Editor, Panorama.