

Prime Minister

I have a general policy - on which I try to give a lead - that people who work here should not talk about their work. So I would prefer to say 'no' to the interviews below. I know that Sir

MR BUTLER

HUGO YOUNG/ANNE SLOMAN PROFILE

Clive Whitmore shares my reluctance

I agree with you not.

As you know, Hugo Young and Anne Sloman are preparing a radio profile of the Prime Minister in a series of six programmes tentatively for broadcast in May. This is to mark her 10 years as party leader and, in this Parliament, her record of being the longest continuously serving post-war Prime Minister.

FERS
25.1.

You will also know that Mrs Sloman, with Simon Jenkins or Hugo Young, has made programmes on the FCO and the Treasury. The Prime Minister did not wholeheartedly embrace the idea of a profile of her when it was mooted, largely I think because of Hugo Young's involvement, but I have not attempted to dissuade Ministers who have sought guidance on participation; indeed I have positively urged some to take part.

Mrs Sloman has now approached me to say they have concluded they do not wish to interview the Prime Minister, as they had suggested they might at the outset. They feel that it would be better for a picture to emerge from the very large number of people they have interviewed or are interviewing, ranging from President Reagan and Helmut Schmidt to Alfred Sherman, John Hoskyns etc.

No

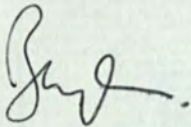
Mrs Sloman said they would, however, like to make one of the six programmes about the working of No 10, as distinct from the personality of the Prime Minister, though I am sure that would come out. To this end they would like to interview, on terms and ground rules and covering areas to be agreed:

- you
- me
- Peter Middleton
- Clive Whitmore
- David Williamson
- and possibly Michael Butler, Brussels.

No
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Mrs Sloman has not yet fully worked out the approach, but it would presumably cover the conduct of business from No 10 - meetings, Question Time, visits/tours, press conferences etc. She puts considerable emphasis on the reputation which she has established in Whitehall for integrity in operations of this kind. We should need, if we turned down the idea, to make it clear why No 10 is different from Treasury and FCO, and a special case for maintaining reasonably anonymity.

You agreed to pursue this request alongside the projected series on No 10 by Christopher Jones, BBC TV, who has now written to you with his broad proposals.



BERNARD INGHAM
23 January 1985

PS: Please see attached correspondence just to hand from Mrs Sloman.