

PRIME MINISTER

YOUR TIME

*Rs. effort -  
also in need of hours  
in every day  
not*

Your time is one of your most precious commodities and never more so than in the next two or three years. So this note, which reflects wide consultation within the Office, suggests a framework within which you might wish to allocate your time.

Of course, the diary needs to be kept flexible, responding to day to day needs. Many meetings are determined by events outside your control and others are virtually unavoidable. But a framework of the sort suggested below would help us to monitor whether the diary is meeting your objectives and to plan so that it does.

So with these aims in view, I wonder whether the diary might not encompass, over a period of time, the following objectives:

1. It should allow you to follow through the following strategic issues:

- ✓ law and order
- ✓ jobs
- ✓ raising "the quality of education"
- the 3 reviews (social security, local authority finance and personal tax)
- an efficient, value for money public sector

✓ 2. It should permit you to give strategic direction to our foreign policy and see essential foreign visitors

3. It should provide opportunity for you:

- ✓ (i) to give strategic direction to the overall presentation of Government policy \* and
- (ii) for you to promote some important presentational themes, e.g.

\* See footnote over.

- promulgation of the Government's record
- an Administration which - to use that awful phrase - "cares and listens"
- the Government's programme goes beyond economics in its emphasis in enlarging the freedom and independence of ordinary people.
- the kind of Britain you want to see
- the need to reinforce traditional ethical values while encouraging economic change
- the enterprise society
- dangers of the Opposition's alternative programme

Engagements arranged in pursuit of these themes should be tailored so far as possible so that you can be seen with people, publicising Government successes, and countering public perception of Government weaknesses (e.g. opening new hospitals, roads, etc.)

4. It should provide for you to have meetings with, in particular:

- often with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Secretary of State for Employment, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord President, Chancellor of the Duchy and Chief Whip
- periodically tete-a-tetes with other Cabinet Ministers
- ✓ - media, including editors
- ✓ - MPs
- ✓ - Party

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Footnote

- ✓ \* In this connection, Stephen and Bernard have suggested that you should have a weekly meeting early on Mondays with the Chairman, Lord President, Bernard, etc. to decided how to exploit the week's presentational opportunities and to avoid the pitfalls.

5. It should allow you time for "ideas gathering", (through seminars, visits, personal briefings, with distinguished outsiders, etc.)

I recommend this as a framework which you might have in mind when planning your time. The diary is already largely determined for the rest of 1985, but the framework might be helpful in planning it for 1986. If you agree we will:

- (i) keep the framework in mind when recommending to you whether you accept diary engagements;
- (ii) review the forward diary framework to check whether it is meeting the five objectives above; and
- (iii) suggest action to you if it appears that any of the objectives are being neglected.

*and time to get about the country!*  
*NLW*

N. L. W.

N. L. Wicks

20 October 1985

cc: Mr. Powell  
Mr. Norgrove  
Mr. Flesher  
Mr. Addison  
Mrs. Ryder

Mr. Catford  
Mr. Ingham  
Mr. Alison  
Mr. Sherbourne  
Mr. Redwood  
Mr. Griffiths