

CONFIDENTIALMR SHERBOURNE

cc All Private Secretaries
Mrs Richards
Miss Bowers
Supt. Butler

It might be helpful if I set out the Private Office's role during the General Election campaign.

In general our role now is:

- (i) To support the Prime Minister in any essential duties which she has to carry out as Head of Government;
- (ii) To provide assistance which may properly be required of us in providing factual material and checking speeches etc., which contain official information or statements of Government policy;
- (iii) To advise the Prime Minister on the use of Government services or the facilities during the Election campaign;
- (iv) To provide for the Prime Minister's communications and security.

As regards the first, we will try to keep to a minimum the official papers and other matters with which we have to trouble the Prime Minister for the next four weeks. We must make sure that we can always contact her quickly and for that purpose a Garden Room Girl will accompany the Prime Minister on her tours. I should be grateful if you and the Party officials can give the Garden Room Girl every assistance in maintaining communication with No. 10. It is essential that when the Prime Minister reaches a settled location, the Garden Room Girl should be within 10 minutes of a telephone. I hope that whenever possible, similar arrangements can be made when the Prime Minister is on the move.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

2

I would only arrange for a Private Secretary or member of the Press Office to accompany the Prime Minister's party if Government business required it. I do not expect to have to do so, barring unforeseen events.

As regards the second, it is perfectly proper for us to provide factual material and to check speeches and statements: I hope that we will be asked to check speeches and statements since the Prime Minister still speaks as Head of Government even on Party occasions. It would also have been proper for Mr. Ingham to provide the Prime Minister with his usual summary of the morning's press, but this would be difficult in practice if the PM is leaving No. 10 at 8.15 am on most mornings; and it is no doubt likely to be unnecessary since Central Office will be preparing a full summary. But the Prime Minister may like Mr. Ingham and me to be available at about 8 am, before she leaves No. 10 in the mornings, so that she can give us instructions about the line on any press stories relating to the Government and commission any factual material she wants before her morning press conference. Could you please let Mr. Ingham know during the day whether the Prime Minister would wish to see him when she returns to No. 10 at the end of the day.

As regards the use of Government services or facilities, it is better for the Prime Minister to err on the side of propriety if there is any question of using Government facilities for what may be seen as Party political purposes. For security reasons, the Prime Minister should travel in either your battle bus or in a 10 Downing Street car driven by a 10 Downing Street driver even on election tours: there are arrangements for the Party to reimburse the cost. I understand that the Garden Room Girl will travel on your battle bus and I am grateful for this facility. Transport for the political staff should be provided by the Party. Could you please arrange for Mrs Richards to be kept informed of details of any changes in the Prime Minister's movements so she can plan the Garden Room Girls' arrangements.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

3

Party transport rather than No. 10 cars should be used for conveying to Central Office any material which the Prime Minister asks for while preparing for her morning press conference: you may want to arrange for a car to be available for this purpose.

Finally, on communications and security, the Garden Room Girls will provide communications in the normal way. The Special Branch will provide protection and are liaising with you and Central Office on arrangements: I have told Superintendent Butler that if he had any anxiety about the arrangements he should let me know straightaway.

N.L.W.

N.L. WICKS

14 May 1987

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