



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Sunday 12 Feb.

Bernard

Mrs. Carol Steehy -
of Van's Fair - I have
agreed with Woodrow Wyatt that
I will give an interview with her.
I gave her instructions last week
and when she telephoned, - you (in the office)
apparently had not got the message
Will you ring her and give a time.
P.T.O

She is coming to London
20th February for 10 days.

ms.



11.00am
~~10.00~~

22 Feb
Wed.

10 DOWNING STREET

Amanda

Could you pl offer
me 45 minutes on
a date from Feb 21
to March 3.

Sheehy ¹³⁷/₂

WED 22 FEBRUARY

11.00 am

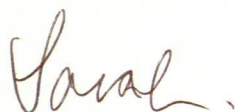
Coail Sheehy has been
informed.

Bernard

Attached is a note based on my conversation with Gail Sheehy.

When I mentioned that we had rejected all requests to interview the Prime Minister in advance of her tenth anniversary she sounded worried and said no-one had told her: but equally she reiterated that the article was an in depth character portrait of the Prime Minister and the significant people and events in her life . I guess it depends how liberally you interpret a tenth anniversary article! (Ok,Ok!)

Anyway if you would like me to go back to her tomorrow let me know. (Incidentally - she says you never replied to her letter: I assume that's because she sought the assistance of Woodrow Wyatt before we'd had time to process her letter).

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sarah", followed by a comma.

Sarah

February 20 1989

MR INGHAM

PRIME MINISTER'S INTERVIEW WITH GAIL SHEEHY

The Prime Minister has agreed to do an interview with Gail Sheehy on Wednesday, February 22 at 11 am. Ms Sheehy is a freelance journalist who is writing a 10 - 15,000 word article for the April edition of 'Vanity Fair' magazine.

Ms Sheehy says she is writing an "in depth character portrait of the PM by analysing the stages of her development into the phenomenal world leader she is today". She is researching this by "studying the significant people and events that have made an impact on her."

She has said she would like to ask the Prime Minister the following questions:

1. - There is usually a formative experience for politicians that stimulates their political consciousness - an epiphany. Was there such for you?
2. - Your father had a confrontational style in public life. Did you model yourself after that style?
3. - Your girlhood spanned the Depression Years of the 1930's and the war years with their severe shortages. In Grantham what forms did community responsibility for ones neighbours or workers who were laid off take?
4. - Perhaps you could see Vere Court from your bedroom window? What did you think of the poorly dressed, rather wild children who played in that alley, who's parents may have belonged to the "seething classes"?
5. - Your mother is rarely mentioned except as a "Martha" (biblical reference) - but was she also strongly willed; laying down the law at home?
6. - When was the last time you saw your father before he died? And what was he most proud of in your accomplishments?
7. - Classmates of yours at the Kasteven and Grantham School recall how remarkable it was to hear you question guests in a formal parliamentary manner; but at the time they made fun of you. Did it hurt or did you even then not care about being "liked" so long as you were recognised as being right?

8. - Jumping to your first years as Prime Minister - of the attacks on you for your class, gender and style, which did you find particularly unfair and what did you do to correct those false impressions?
9. - Why do you still study for PM's Questions as if it were the first time?
10. - Did the degree you received in Chemistry at Oxford affect your attitude towards science and the environment?
11. - Listening to Mr Gorbachev at the United Nations in December one wondered if he'd had a "Thatcherism" implant: "Freedom of choice is a universal principle" he said, "it knows no exceptions". Have you had fairly fierce debates with him during your various conversations. On what major points did you win him over and conversely was he able to win you over?
12. - What did you learn about leadership from President Reagan and what did you teach him?
13. - In your view, given the severe deficit in the US and trade imbalance in Britain is this a time for a kinder, gentler approach as President Bush has suggested?
14. - Following the 1979 Election it was said "the best man won". At the same time there were insulting references about your not being feminine: President Reagan has said how beautiful you are. Is it because you are now secure in your role and power that you feel you can flaunt your femininity?
15. - Everyone says you argue and demand but have the infuriating habit of being right. When was the last time you were wrong?

Clearly there are too many questions here for the 45 minutes which the Prime Minister has agreed to make available. Some of the questions do not seem very suitable, others could obviously be used to flesh out an article on the theme of Prime Minister's tenth anniversary: you will note the article is due to appear in the April edition of the magazine. We have so far rejected all bids to interview the Prime Minister in advance of the anniversary.

You may wish to show these questions to the Prime Minister and see which she is content to answer in the time available?

Sarah Charman

Sarah Charman
Press Office

February 20 1989