

From: George Gardiner, M.P.



House of Commons
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dear Margaret,

3rd April, 1979.

You invited our views on a TV confrontation with Callaghan :

1. Yes, you must accept the idea. Indeed, you must appear eager.
2. In fact, you'll gain by it. Once the two personalities are presented together, yours will clearly be the honest one. And you are more clever - you can think more quickly than he does.
3. It must be on a "potential Prime Ministers" basis - no prepared slots for minor party leaders afterwards.
4. One programme, covering the whole range of issues, is more in your interest than two.
5. You could seek to play the BBC against London Weekend, as Norman suggests.
6. But wouldn't it be better for you to rise above all this, seize the initiative, and propose that you and Callaghan appear jointly for 1½ hours interview screened concurrently by BBC and ITV - on the Tuesday evening before polling day?

This way you would not be conferring a benefit on one competing station, but ensuring that the programme reached the maximum number of voters.

The election issues would then be fought out in the traditional, ~~congressional~~ way during the campaign from election platforms - and then ~~the issues~~ brought together in a TV interview featuring the two of you near the end.

There would obviously have to be an interviewer acceptable to both - or even two interviewers, one from BBC and one from ITV.

Yours ever,
George Gardiner