

MRS. THATCHER'S CLOTHES, HAIR, EATING HABITS, ETC.

I have discussed with Alison Ward and now give the following guidance:

The Prime Minister regards personal matters of this sort as trivial and unconnected with her position as Prime Minister. She is insistent that we should never volunteer such details to the media. However, because information comes to the press from other people or through personal observation, it is impossible to deny some of her more obvious preferences which are visible for all to see. For example, if she is seen to wear blue x days in succession, that can be observed and reported by the press but we should not waste our time checking out matters of this sort.

But there will be certain stories which will emerge from specific events, e.g. this week the press have heard, presumably from the firm, that the Prime Minister has received and accepted a dress from a Leeds firm. If the press ring up and ask us, we can confirm that the dress has been received and that the Prime Minister is very pleased with it. But we should give no details such as size, style or colour. If the firm choose to publicise it, that is their business.

And what goes for dress applies equally to hairstyle, food preferences, shoes, cars, pets, etc. etc. Each case must be taken on its merits and, although we can take a general line with general enquiries, specific cases will have to stand on their merits and Alison Ward will understand if we go to her, rather than Lady Tilney, for answers. She, for her part, will let us know if the Prime Minister receives any particularly noteworthy or interesting gifts or matters which she thinks will arouse press interest.

This is general guidance on the personal side of Mrs. Thatcher's life which she would prefer to keep private. We can, of course, go further in the case of Mr. Thatcher and Carol and Mark.

/Mr. Thatcher