

ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

You have agreed to give an interview to James Bishop, Editor, Illustrated London News, for 45 minutes from 11.15am on Monday. The objective is to mark your 4th anniversary in Government. (He published an interview with you to mark your 1st anniversary in 1980).

Background

Mr Bishop is a strong supporter and you will recall that Angus Maude pressed his claims for an article to mark your first anniversary.

You have agreed to spend a few minutes on a photograph for their cover. This will be done, with your agreement, in the White Room where the photographer will be set up for 12 noon.

The origins of this interview was a request from Mr Bishop for facilities to enable him to produce a piece on how No 10 operates (see Annex I). You turned this down on my advice and agreed to a more conventional interview of the kind now in prospect.

Interview

Mr Bishop now wishes to pursue 3 areas:

1. your objectives when you took office, and your main achievements over the last 4 years; referring especially to inflation, European Budget and Falklands.
2. Unexpected difficulties in office and what, if any, changes you would make in the light of the experience of those difficulties.
3. Having said you would need 10 years to turn this country round, what kind of country/society would you like to see in 1989/90; what is your vision of the future? In this section he is likely to be particularly interested in unemployment and Northern Ireland.

Advice

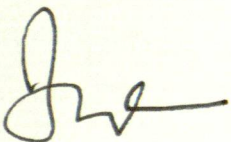
I do not propose to burden you with briefing because this interview ought to be conducted more at philosophical level. The article will not be published until just before your 4th anniversary in May. It will then remain on waiting room tables for months. Thus your objective ought to be to package the Government in the most favourable light.

In these circumstances I suggest that your guidelines should be:

- you feel you are well on the way to securing your initial objective - to reform the country's habits and attitudes and replace them with a concern for honest money and goods and true politics and presentation; you believe you have changed the way people look at things;
- there is a tremendously long way to go to conquer inflation and create the basis for an expanding economy - not merely because of international circumstances but also because of ingrained domestic attitudes; and
- your aim is of a UK growing prosperous in a just society which discharges its responsibilities abroad both in terms of defending democracy and helping the developing in ways which will give them longer term self reliance and strength.

One final point: Journalists tell me that the rats on all sides are getting at your back-to-Victorian-principles approach in the Brian Walden interview. What they are doing is to play down the positive values and success of the Victorian era and to highlight its worst aspects in terms of poverty, exploitation etc. You need to redress this balance and emphasise that what we now need to do is to combine contemporary protection for the worst off with the undeniable virtues of Victorian development, entrepreneurial flair and effort.

Content?



B. INGHAM

25 March 1983

ANNEX 1

James Bishop 28 March
to do interview 5.00pm

PRIME MINISTER

would prefer after Budget

ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

45 mg

You will recall that you gave the Editor of the above journal, James Bishop, an interview to mark your first anniversary in 1980. The idea had considerable support from Angus Maude.

Mr Bishop has now asked if, to mark your 4th anniversary, he might be allowed to do something different - ie. an article reporting on the way 10 Downing Street operates.

His letter explains:

"What I have in mind is an explanation of who works on a day-to-day basis at No 10, what their particular responsibilities are, how it is all co-ordinated and directed, and what changes in the system the Prime Minister has introduced during her four years. I propose to ask my Deputy Editor, Roger Berthoud, whom you will know from his days on the Times, to write the piece. I would imagine it would entail his spending a minimum of a couple of days inside No 10, and having the opportunity to talk to some of the people concerned - which would of course be cleared in advance with you, or whatever authority is nominated. We would also appreciate the opportunity of taking some photographs, which again we should be happy to clear with you before publication."

To meet the May deadline, Mr Bishop would like the work to be completed by the end of March.

I see no problem about controlling the picture angle of such an article, provided you were to agree to their access. We should however have to take counsel of your security advisers.

But so far we have not facilitated any article explaining how No 10 works and how its operations have changed or evolved over your first four years.

There might be some advantage in explaining to the country how No 10 operates, especially if it were to correct some of the more fancy notions. I am sure the Illustrated London News would do a reliable and sympathetic job.

But you may well feel that the balance of advantage comes firmly down against the kind of article proposed and the facilities we would be requested to give.

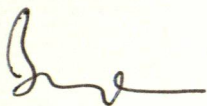
Prefer me to turn down?

Yes - it would open the flood gates.

Given, however, the support you can expect from Mr Bishop, would you like to offer an interview. The Illustrated London News is not a major communications outlet but it is read widely in waiting rooms etc, and an article around May could be helpful.

Agree?

I declined yes - but not on how No. 10 works



B. INGHAM
28 February 1983

We would have to control the circulation of ILS staff within No. 10 very carefully, particularly if they were to be here for two days. But we could do that.

On more general grounds I am opposed to publicity being given to No. 10 staff. That only encourages e.g. pressure for Select Committees for No. 10 staff to give evidence and other attempts to give us a public profile which I think would be unhelpful to the Prime Minister. So I

agree with Mr. Ingham's recommendation that you should give an interview.

FERB

28.2.