



British Embassy
PARIS

15 February 1980

A. Wood Esq
Press Office
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Andy

REQUESTS FROM THE FRENCH MEDIA FOR INTERVIEWS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER

1. Charles Anson sent Michael Elliott with his letter of 11 January a list of requests for interviews which have been sent direct to the Prime Minister. I now enclose our own list, which sets out in chronological order the requests of which we are aware, including two new and important ones from FR3 and Le Monde. Some of the others (which I have put in square brackets) were clearly turned down at the time and can be disregarded. You may for completion's sake wish to write into our list details of those on yours which we did not know enough about to include.
2. You will have seen Paris telegram no. 195 with the Ambassador's suggestion that the Prime Minister might wish to give a TV interview or, failing that, an interview which would be published in Le Monde. If the Prime Minister decides on a TV interview we have suitable openings on all three channels to choose from, all offering the sort of in-depth interview we have in mind. We can start exploring further when we know what timing would suit the Prime Minister. My own inclination is to offer first refusal to Jean-Louis Servan-Schreiber's "Questionnaire" programme, which was the first in the queue (thus giving us an unanswerable response to those who may complain). ¹⁵ ~~and~~ is also the only programme which would broadcast the Prime Minister's words in the original English, complementing them with sub-titles in French rather than dubbing (though there are of course different views about which method is best). Furthermore TF1 has the biggest audience. In this connection I should be grateful for copies of the requests you received direct from Henri Marque, TF1 (dated 5 December) and Antenne 2's "L'Invité du jeudi" programme (date unknown - see your list) so that we can see how these fit into the picture. (In general can we please from now on have a copy of any request received for an interview with the Prime Minister?)
3. If the Prime Minister decides in favour of a press interview, we should without hesitation go for Le Monde.

Yours ever

Juliet

Juliet Collings

cc: Robin Christopher Esq
News Dept./FCO



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- ... 1. February 1980. André Fontaine, Le Monde. See attached copy of letter to FCO.
2. February 1980. *Christiane Clerc, Figaro Magazine. Now subsumed in earlier request from Marianne Lohse - see sep letter.*
3. 21 January 1980. Christine Ockrent, FR3. A 45/60 minute interview in English, plus a short film profile made up from archive material. For the weekly news feature "Le Nouveau Vendredi", which is running a series of "meetings with the world's leaders". Copy of request attached.
- ... 4. 5 December 1979. Henri Marque, TF1. Direct request to No 10. Reply 20 December and "shall not lose sight of request".
5. [26 November 1979. Le Courrier du Parlement. Written interview. Refused 20 December.]
6. 29 October 1979. Gérard Carreyrou, Europe 1. Direct request to No. 10. Noted 7 November.
7. 24 October 1979. André Célerié, TF1. Direct request to No. 10. Similar requests on 8 October, 6 June, 22 May, 9 May.
8. 17 October 1979. Olivier de Rincquesen, Europe 1. Club de la Presse. Direct request to No. 10. Noted 17 October 1979.
9. [5 October 1979. Nicholas Powell, Paris Match. Photo project. Direct to No. 10. Refused 17 October.]
10. October 1979. Arnaud de Borchgrave, Newsweek. Direct request to No. 10. Noted 23 October. Similar requests in August and May.
11. 11 September 1979. Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, Antenne 2. Cartes sur Table, discussion programme. HMA wrote to News Dept., who replied on 24 September that prospects were not good.
12. September 1979. Nouvel Observateur
13. 6 August 1979. Yves Cuau, L'Express. Converted into interview with Lord Carrington, February 1980.
14. [3 July 1979. An-Nahar. Refused 11 July.]
15. July 1979. Serge Maffert, Figaro. Regrets 23 July.
16. 21 May 1979. Jean-Louis Servan-Schreiber, TF1. Direct request to No 10. "Questionnaire", 50 minute TV interview programme. Would use English, plus French sub-titles, not dubbing or "voice-over". Regrets 17 July, but promised to reconsider when moment more propitious.

IMMEDIATE

No. 10 Paris office

OUTWARD

itals) C.V. Anson

TELEGRAM

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[TEXT]

INTERVIEW WITH FRENCH TELEVISION:

YOUR TELEGRAM 225 AND TELECON ANSON/MISS COLLINGS.

WE AGREE WITH YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS. ~~AND WOULD BE~~ GRATEFUL
IF YOU COULD NOW EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES SUBJECT TO
THESE TWO CONDITIONS:

- (A) THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD WISH TO BE INTERVIEWED
ON THE DAY THE PROGRAMME IS BROADCAST TO ENSURE THAT
IT IS UP-TO-DATE WHICH IT MIGHT NOT BE IF RECORDED
EARLIER;
- (B) THE LENGTH OF THE INTERVIEW SHOULD BE A MAXIMUM OF
20/25 MINUTES SO AS TO CONCENTRATE THE QUESTIONS ON
THE BUDGET ISSUE AND OTHER MAJOR TOPICS.

IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO FIT THE INTERVIEW INTO THE PRIME
MINISTER'S PROGRAMME WHICH IS CROWDED FOR EARLY MARCH.

BUT AT THE MOMENT 5 OR 10 MARCH MIGHT BE POSSIBLE. CA 27/2