

THE LENS

The Staff
Newspaper for
Independent
Television
News
Special election
Issue—June 1 1983

ITN to link with TV-am for 'Breakfast Special'

ITN, TV-am and the ITV programme companies are combining their resources to produce "The Nation Decides - Breakfast Special" on the morning of June 10th, the day following the General Election.

ITN's contribution will

include highlights of the overnight results, the key declarations, claims of victory and concessions, analysis of the results and a look forward to the likely final outcome, together with any election news which arises in the early morning. The ITV prog-

ramme companies will provide, in their own areas, up-to-the-minute regional reports of the outcome, whilst TV-am will concentrate on comment and speculation from a variety of perspectives.

The programme will run

for the whole four-hour period from 6am to 10am without any commercial breaks, as is traditional in all ITV general election results programmes, and will lead directly into the ITN results programme "The Nation Decides" which will recommence at

10am with Alastair Burnet.

The main presenters of the Breakfast Special will be Robert Kee for TV-am and Martyn Lewis for ITN.

FOOTNOTE: See page six for programme presentation details.

Final countdown to the 'Computerised' election . . .

As D-Day, June 9, creeps closer, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the 1983 General Election — the 23rd this century and the eighth to be covered by ITN — differs vastly from anything which the nation has seen before.

Sweeping boundary changes have increased the number of Parliamentary seats from 635 to 650 and have considerably altered both the shape and traditions of 90 per cent of the constituencies. This uncertainty blossomed into confusion during the early days of the campaign with the widely differing predictions seen in the crystal balls of various pollsters.

Difference

But perhaps the most significant difference is the increasing reliance by the electorate on the media for reliable information, and the role that television, in particular, will be playing in the immediate pre-election period, and in providing a comprehensive results service when "The Nation Decides . . ."

This has all helped to generate more interest in the election than ever before — and further heightens the importance ITN attaches to the standard of its programmes.

The widespread use of ENG has also simplified election results coverage and will be playing a major role in ITN's coverage for the ITV network. In a bid to repeat ITN's successful battle of the



ratings in the coverage of the 1979 election, David Nicholas has pin-pointed four objectives:

1. **To be first with the results**, ensuring that viewers

know that ITN will be first with the news.

2. **Creating impact** with the effectiveness of the "fire path" deployed to cover the drama of election night. We

now have sufficient ENG units to ensure that we won't need a studio panel in the early part of the results programme — instead, we can use remote cameras to talk to everyone who matters in politics.

3. **The quality of our analysis**: it is important to avoid a cold string of league tables. To spot the early trends and highlight the important ones in a clear and effective way. This is where our computer graphics are invaluable and our pioneering work in this field has stimulated the BBC to follow our example.

Serious

4. **The right atmosphere**: The night of June 9 will feature two great television parties — one on the Independent network, and the other on BBC. It is important that, through Alastair Burnet, we create a humour and warmth which will extend beyond the television and reach the viewers.

"It's a serious subject but must not be treated in a puffed manner," said the editor. "Geoffrey Cox once said that ITN is informed but informal — and that's a damned good slogan on which to base our operation."

Boundary changes mean that the race to be first constituency to declare a result will take on a completely new look for this election. A greatly reduced electorate has strengthened Torbay's bid to be among the front runners, and Wrexham is tipped for a place.

'Follow the Leader' brief for Target news teams

MARGARET THATCHER

Reporter: Michael Brunson
Camera Crews: Bob Hammond and Paul Dickie
Mike Borer and Mike Williams
Lighting Man: Rob Bowles
Fixer: Mike Nolan

MICHAEL FOOT

Reporter: David Rose
Camera Crews: Chris Squires and Chris Hease
Mike Inglis and Harold Richardson
Lighting Man: Gary Mullins
Fixer: Simon Bucks

ROY JENKINS

Reporter: Derek Taylor
Camera Crews: Paul Carleton and Jon Hunt
Alan Downes and Don Warren
Lighting Man: Clive Morrison
Fixer: Chris Jameson

DAVID STEEL

Reporter: Alastair Stewart
Camera Crews: Nigel Thomson and Gil Martin
Bruce Shayler and Mike Parkin
Lighting Man: Frank Hilling
Fixer: Mervyn Hall

ITN were preparing for the possibility of a June election three months prior to the Prime Minister's announcement on May 9th.

Consequently, when Mrs Thatcher revealed her intentions to seek the confidence of the country exactly one month before polling day, the teams responsible for covering the hectic four-week campaigning programme were ready (as they say in racing and parliamentary parlance) for the "off".

Within seconds of the news, Stewart Purvis switched on the green light and ITN's election campaign vehicle slid smoothly into action thanks to the meticulous planning of Don Horobin, Nigel Hancock and Derek Murray.

Target teams, comprising a reporter, two camera crews, a lighting man and a fixer were assigned to shadow each of the four party leaders for the duration of the campaign until the eve of the election.

During this four week period, however, news teams are assured of every co-operation, for all four parties are aware that there is a large percentage of "floating" voters who may be influenced by television coverage.

Feeding back

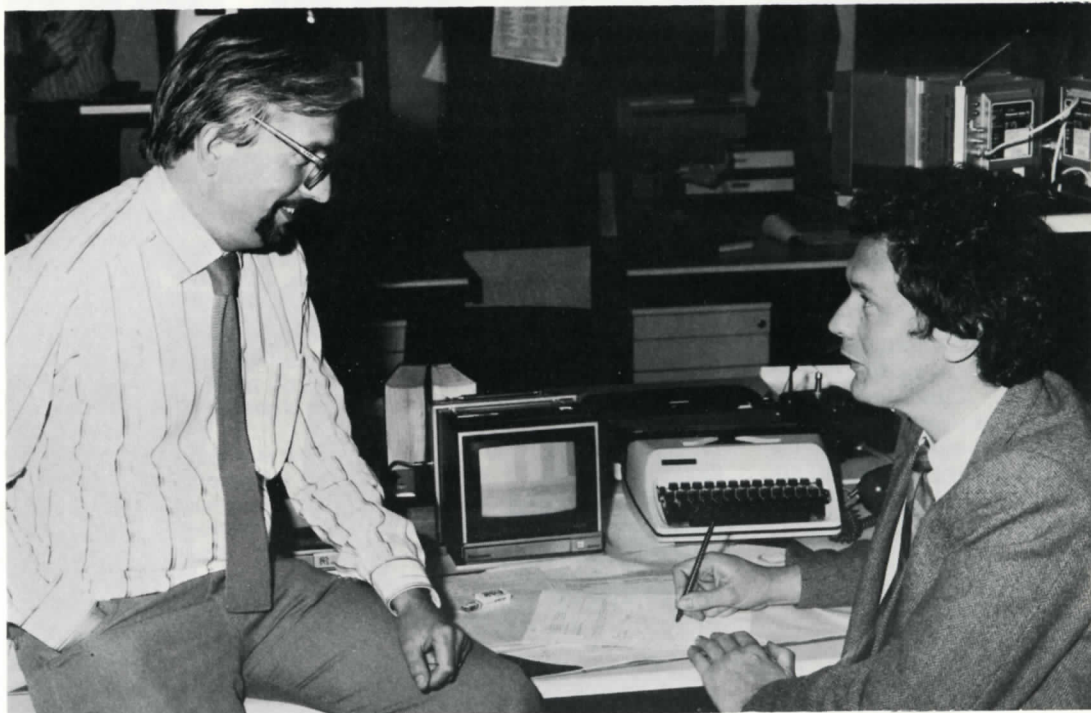
Other ENG crews have been feeding back campaign information from all over the country, providing background information including regional reports and profiles of similar constituencies; such as railway towns or large manufacturing conurbations.

The advent of ENG coverage has greatly facilitated the pre-election coverage for Stewart Purvis and his team:

"We are now far better equipped to give a comprehensive picture of life on the road during a hectic political campaign," he said. "We are getting the pictures much earlier and we have the immediate facility of being able to inject them from around the country."

In planning and executing the campaign coverage ITN has been to great lengths to ensure a balance of exposure across the political spectrum.

'SCRAMBLE' — AND CAMPAIGN TEAM IS MOBILISED



Nigel Hancock, who has been masterminding the campaign target teams, with Stewart Purvis, producer for the campaign coverage.

'ITN ahead in pre-election stakes'

ITN target teams have convincingly beaten the BBC in the race "to get the pictures back", according to Nigel Hancock, senior news editor in charge of the campaign input.

This is the first election where ENG has been comprehensively used (there was one ENG camera in 1979) and the target teams in the Volkswagen transporters have meant that ITN has made the fullest possible use of the ENG capability.

"It is working very well," said Nigel. "Everyone within those teams has a particular job to do,

claim by Hancock

knows what it is, and becomes fully acquainted with the story in editorial terms.

"It has brought up some golden nuggets editorially. In 1979 a programme editor at ITN would look at various stories on tape and select from the mix. Now the

reporter has the responsibility of producing the package, as you might say, on site. When the package is ready it is simply plugged into the nearest Post Office point, our OB or links, or one of the regional companies.

"This operation requires the greatest discipline from the entire team. If the package misses its line booking it could fail to get on News at Ten which could put the whole programme out of balance because every package is inter-related within the programme. And it's a very delicate balance."

Weaving a network of 'reliable sources' into the ultimate results programme



The team which has gathered nearly 600 loyal informants . . . election news editor David Mannion with secretary Terry O'Sullivan and assistant Rosie Hayes.

The speed and efficiency with which results are received, fed into the computer and flashed onto the screen is the very cornerstone of ITN's six-hour election night epic "The Nation Decides".

The task of ensuring that all 650 declarations are telephoned to ITN within seconds of the count, as well as running the election news desk for the duration of the programme, is the responsibility of David Mannion who has temporarily forsaken his home news editor's hat to concentrate on matters electoral.

"We are providing the raw material for the election night programme," he said. "It is essential that we provide a solid foundation with a fast and accurate results service."

Local radio

To ensure the vital speed and accuracy, the election desk will rely on ITN's own news teams in the more newsworthy constituencies, supported by a hand-picked network of loyal correspondents, and the 39 independent radio stations for its results service from each of the 650 constituencies, reverting to the policy adopted for both the 1974 elections.

For the '79 election, a decision was made to rely on a major agency service for some of the late and less important results, but this experiment of marrying two contrasting services has been abandoned in favour of arranging our own coverage for all seats.

Correspondents will telephone the result on special lines to ITN House where a team of highly-professional VDU operators (all used to dealing with election figures) will feed the data into a computer which digests it and checks it before feeding it into the Aston character generator which flashes the result onto the main screen. In most cases, this information will be transmitted to the nation within seconds of the Returning Officer's announcement.

Personal loyalty

Many of the freelance correspondents are veterans of several election campaigns, and have developed a strong personal loyalty towards ITN. "They are reliable professionals who will continue to provide the best possible service", said Mannion.

But the job of the election news editor and his team extends far beyond simply providing a results service and the briefing of the correspondents; their input also embraces the preparation of special news packages, the planning of OB locations, constant liaison with the assignments team and the direction of ENG from one location to another.

The introduction of ENG has been widely welcomed by most departments involved with the election coverage, and Mannion lists himself among its main supporters: "It provides more mobility and flexibility, enabling us to spread our resources in the right direction," he said.



Sue Tinson, producer of *The Nation Decides*, discusses with Nick Pollard the editing operation for the special programme.

"We will have 32 live locations, of which 26 are declaration points, some single and others multiple. Glasgow, for instance, has 12," said Sue. "Nine of these locations will be covered by ENG units and ten more units will be moving around to cover stories and interviews, such as covering the leaders at their homes."

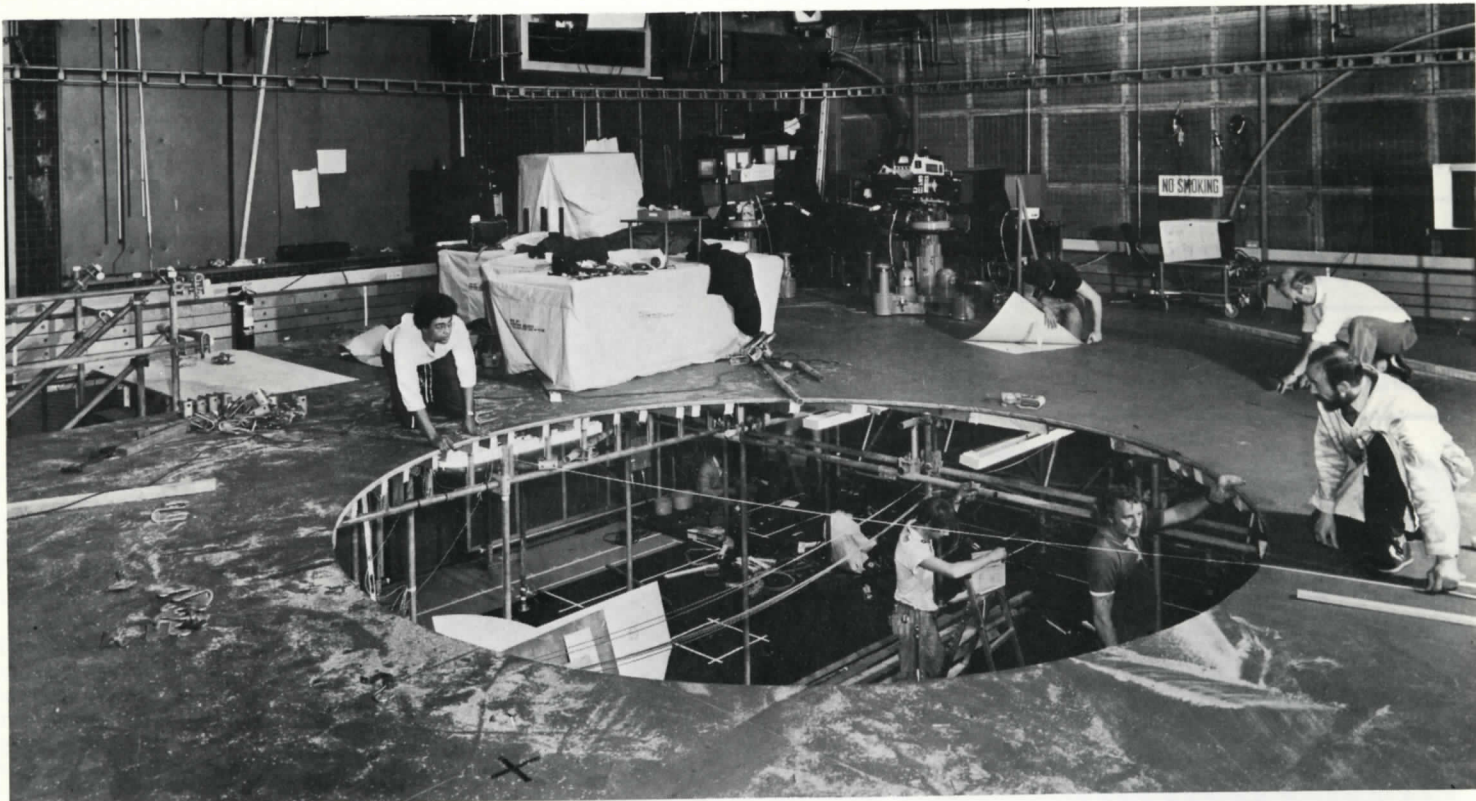
"An important factor this year is that the newly created target teams will be carried forward into *The Nation Decides* which means that the reporters who have been with the leaders throughout the campaign will stay with them for the two days of the election.

"The live OBs will be recorded for the major package of highlights for Day Two.

We shall also be recording other OBs and ENG units of the less important declarations for use later."

Nick will be responsible for recording material for re-play on the two days. He will have seven writers who will be working on a shift basis from 10 p.m. on election night until the end of the extended News at Ten on June 10. Every machine in ITN House, including those for Channel Four News and hire of services, as well as two more specially hired, will be used.

Sue Tinson's first election was in 1964 when, as a trainee, she worked as a runner. In 1966 she was working with Richard Wakeley on the state of the parties and for the two 1974 elections she organised the detailed results unit. In 1979 she was deputy to the executive producer Barrie Sales.



You may have noticed that something is afoot in Studio One . . .

Veterans of previous elections will recognise it immediately as one of the great nightmares which is thrust upon the production office every time that a general election is planned. They will recognise too, that despite the temporary inconvenience caused, set construction is a vital stage in the planning of the results programme and adds considerable style and atmosphere to one of the most important and widely-watched of all television productions.

Unique

First design ideas of the set for *The Nation Decides* were sketched towards the end of last year by designer Quentin Chases, and were specifically designed to meet the unique demands of the programme.

He then came up with a model which, after meticulous scribbling by David Nicholas, Diana Edwards-Jones and facilities manager Terry Shore (and a dozen others at various stages) was approved and commissioned.

The actual construction of the set posed few problems; it was built outside and was scheduled to be brought in for easy assembly in the studio over the Bank Holiday weekend. The main task was creating the "upstairs" studio for the erection of the showpiece.

A false floor was constructed to the most stringent specifications – and then a gaping hole was carved on the centre around which the set and technical

THE SET WITH THE HOLE IN THE MIDDLE STILL HIDES A MINT OF SECRETS

equipment will be rigged. It is from here that Alastair Burnet, Peter Sissons and Martyn Lewis will present the programme and there is a facility for up to four additional reporters and guests on the set.

But ITN aren't prepared to divulge everything – according to Terry Shore, the set contains one or two surprises which won't be revealed until the night!

The pulse of the operation during the programme will be the election news desk, situated below on the studio floor. Here,

election news editor David Mannon and his team will handle results and other election news items as they happen, and it is from here that the terminal input operators will be feeding the results into the computers within seconds of the official declarations.

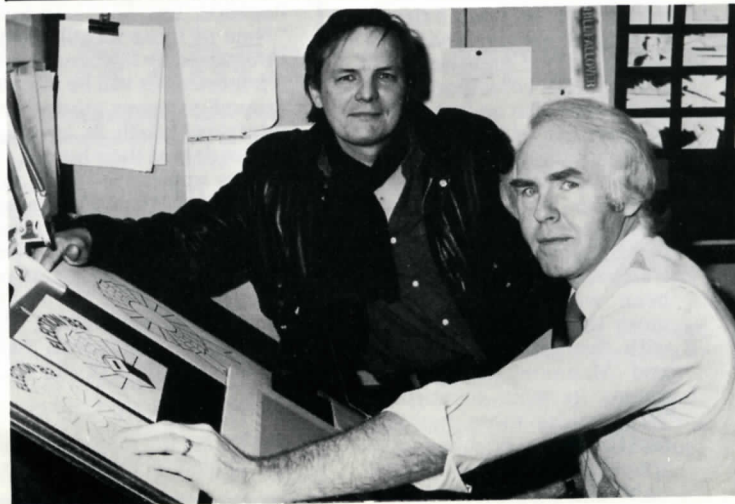
Atmosphere

"The operation would obviously work without this hole in the floor, but experience has proved that it helps to add

atmosphere to the programme," said Terry Shore. "There will be seven cameras upstairs, including one mobile which will enable us to show cut-away shots of the news desk and the activity below. It also helps convey a stronger sense of immediacy to the presenters, and the news desk don't feel divorced from the television presentation."

Detailed photographs of the model of the set have been distributed to all the ITV companies together with full details of the two day production marathon.

A COUPLE OF REAL ARTISTS . . .



Malcolm Beatson, head of graphics, discusses with set-designer Quentin Chases, the finer points of the programme's artwork.

"We have established a total identity for the programme which co-relates with the campaign," explained Malcolm. "The biggest dilemma this time were the new boundary changes. There wasn't one map in existence that gave the whole picture. This meant collecting references from various sources and doing our own compilation. We had to draw up this artwork both for the election factbook – written by Alastair Burnet – and the VT80, the computerised graphics display system."

CHANNEL FOUR GETS DAVID BUTLER'S VOTE

David Butler, who has been a member of the BBC television election team since 1955, is working for Channel Four News during the campaign. He describes himself as an observer commenting on a great national spectacle.

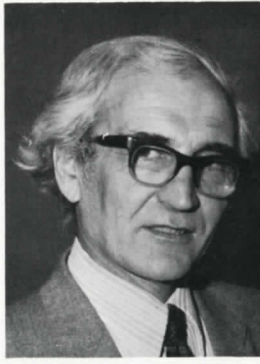
"I haven't left the BBC altogether," he said. "I shall be with BBC radio on the election day. I must say I enjoy working for

Channel Four News. It's quite different."

David Butler is a Fellow of Nuffield College Oxford, and the doyen of election analysts.

"I am not a television person as so many people believe," David explained. "I have just done election nights, ten to 24 hours for each election, for the last 30 years."

"I am just an Oxford academic who happens to



have got involved in this, an involvement which means far more in the technicalities and preparation than in performance."

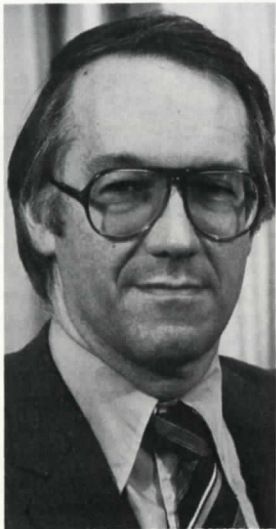
Which was his most enjoyable election? "They are all extraordinarily enjoyable," he replied. "I enjoy the sequence of the assignment. It is the excitement of sorting out a large body of knowledge, followed by some very

quick thinking and if one has any capacity using it at that particular moment of time. It's a fulfilment — it's a Cup Final."

He was interviewed by Peter Sissons, not as an observer but as the author of his new book published on the day the campaigning started in earnest. Its title? "Government Without a Majority."

Perhaps he knows something...

Computers and graphics '83



The technical boys are certainly making their mark on Election '83. Not only is it the first time that ENG has been fully adopted for campaign and results coverage — it also seems that computers are poised to play an increasingly important role in forecasts, results analysis and even visual aids during The Nation Decides.

For the first time all computer operations will be carried out within ITN House and, in the unlikely event of a computer failure there is a standby back-up computer which will automatically take over.

Commissioned

"We can leave nothing to chance," said technical king Dave Lyon (above). "We must be absolutely copper-bottomed."

On previous occasions, ITN has solicited the expertise of Baric for the results service; this year, however, Autofile has been commissioned to create an entirely new programme.

It's a hardware display as the boffins give us 'copper bottomed' election results service

Results will be fed into the system from stringers at all the 650 counts, and quickly (very quickly, we are assured) displayed on the various output sources and the two computerised "scoreboards". One will be located in front of the presenters (out of camera shot) which will provide a running total of seats won by each party, while the second scoreboard will be part of the set. Both will have manual override to eliminate major problems in the unlikely event of a breakdown.

This election will also feature the VT-80 computerised graphics display system which is far more sophisticated than its predecessor, the VT-30.

The election computer will also be providing a direct feed for the Oracle news service.



ITV ORACLE ITV

Oracle will be providing a comprehensive general election results service which will complement ITN's visual output in an extremely effective way. It will be linking with the ITN computer and results will appear on Oracle pages as soon as they come into ITN House.

The great value of the Oracle service is, of course, that the results stay available and are not simply flashed on the screen and then removed. Constituencies are being set out on a regional basis so a result from Kent, for example, will appear with others from the same county.

Carrying 650 results in detail obviously creates a few problems, but the time it takes to get any particular constituent-

cy should, on average, be less than a minute.

In addition to the results, a team of writers and keyboard operators will be working through the night updating the election stories. Oracle will remain on the air when ITN's programme finishes in the early hours and will transmit continuously.

Important pages are:

- 200 Main election index
- 201 Election headlines
- 203 Election summary
- 204 Latest results

Footnote: A handy, printed index of constituencies has been prepared and is available — copies on request from the Oracle editor on ext 2572.

ITN PINS

FAITH ON TIE BADGE AS A POLL 'MEMO'

The ITN tie pins are going into action for *The Nation Decides*. General election news editor Dave Mannion is sending one to each of the correspondents who are phoning in results.

The correspondents' 'give away' is part of the battle between ITN and the BBC to have the results before the other side. In 1970 ITN came up with pen-knife key rings which were 25 pence each. Today they are £2.50. At the last election bios in the shape of a bolt, with the message 'please phone us first' in Pitman's shorthand, were posted to the results reporting corps. The theory was that those who couldn't read shorthand would ask someone else and remember it that much better.

The ITN pin badges were first produced for the Moscow Olympics because, it is thought, this type of give away has an East European origin. But they were a sell out also in the United States for the last presidential election and the OB find them very useful for fixing. They have been swapped for Yorkshire cuff links, Swedish television cuff links and a Guards tie, among other items.

BAN ON GUESTS

A general election causes more turmoil within ITN than any other special programme. It means studio changes, miles and miles of new wiring, many more desks and dozens of extra people drafted in to help on June 9th and 10th. It is, of course, a matter of pride for us, and at the last election a few ITN staff invited friends to look round, adding to the chaos.

Peter Ward, director of engineering, requests that guests are not brought into the building at this time to avoid the problems of '79. There is also a ban on any more visitors to the control rooms of Studios One and Two.



Editing fleet sails into battle

Coverage of Election '83 is the largest single operation ever mounted by ITN . . . and with an increasing reliance on the OB's operation, the lion's share of the organisation is the responsibility of operations controller Bill Reay.

Eight Volkswagen mobile editing units with Sony BVU 800s are now sweeping the country in ITN's new-style political reporting. Each unit has a driver and an editor. Four are being used by Michael Brunson, with Mrs. Thatcher, David Rose with Michael Foot, Alastair Stewart with David Steel and Derek Taylor with Roy Jenkins.

The Volkswagens are used by the campaign target teams, another ITN innovation where the reporter is able, using the mobile editing suite, to complete his own package of



the politician's day-time activities, his or her speech of the day, and an ITN interview.

And they are mobile. One unit was in Edinburgh one day, Middlesbrough the next, and ended up in Birmingham the same day for an evening assignment.

ITN has installed a line

switching room in the plant room at Conservative Central Office to cover the same press conferences. Two ENG crews are deployed.

On the road with the 'target teams' is ITN's fully engineered Northern mobile edit unit, the Range Rover edit unit and six Volkswagen transporters. Each of these is equipped with two BVU 800 series Umatic recorders, two colour monitors, set of interconnecting cables, audio, video and power, one BVU Umatic recorder with SOS injection, one colour monitor for injection, three recorder batteries for BVU 110 P, one battery charger, lip microphones, headphones, and radio telephone.

Up to 29 ITN ENG crews are deployed during the campaign.

Presenters face a hard day's

night as they wait for the Nation to Decide . .

The three front men in the ITN results programme "The Nation Decides" are preparing to launch themselves into a television marathon on Thursday and Friday, 9th and 10th June.

They will be on the screens for up to six hours during the first stint of "The Nation Decides", and will return for a further five hours at 10 a.m. on Friday morning, continuing through until about 3.30 p.m. in the afternoon, when the final results are expected to be announced.

Alastair Burnet, anchor-man for the programme, will be celebrating his seventh election on television by presenting over 12 hours of election news in little more than 24 hours, for he will be fronting an extended News at Ten on the Friday night with

both Sandy Gall and Martyn Lewis.

Supporting him in "The Nation Decides" will be Peter Sissons, who will be operating the VT-80, ITN's computerised graphics system which can show the projected outcome based on

wins and losses, proving beyond doubt that the age of the swingometer is over. Peter too, has a tight schedule, reverting to his more accustomed role as presenter of Channel Four News for an extended one-hour bulletin on Friday evening.

For Martyn Lewis, who completes the team, life will be even more hectic during the two days, since he will also be presenting the ITN segment of the TV-am "Breakfast Special" on Friday morning, pushing his election "studio time" to an incredible 15 hours.

"It's the most exciting 24 hours on television," he said. "The adrenalin is tremendous for all of us - but it's also important that we maintain continuity with the same presenters."

Hot from the wire . . .

Whoever coined the phrase "wired for sound" should have spent the last couple of weeks in the election studio where engineers have fed in 1,500 metres of multi-flex cable containing a total of 15,000 metres of single wires. That's about ten miles for the sound and communications system alone.

Add a further 2,000 metres of single flex cable, plus a further 5,000 for the computers and 6,000 metres for vision including the network of monitors and you have a total of 28,000 metres — more than 17 miles.

Just a few monitors . . .

John Dudman predicts that by election night he will have installed nearly 200 monitors in the studio and control room areas — with 95 per cent of them actually located in the main studio.

The captain regrets . . .

ITN golfers have been hit by the general election. Captain's Day at Tyrrell's Wood on June 3 has been postponed to a date to be announced and the ITN team withdrew from the Natural Break competition at Bristol.

A full report on the Dudley Cup meeting at West Herts will appear in the next issue of The Lens.

Going, going, gone . . .

The BBC/ITN Guide to the New Parliamentary Constituencies was sold out — at £25 a time — before it was formally published. The initial print order of 750 was followed by a second print of 500. The basic methods were devised by Paul McKee and half the constituencies were written up by ITN's Paul Sherwin.

The world watches . . .

UPITN is already satelliting world wide ITN's stories on the general election campaign.

They will be sending edited packages of the results to an audience of 900 million. The packages will be sent via the European satellite to Russia, Eastern bloc countries, Finland, Austria, Saudi Arabia and South Africa; via the Atlantic satellite to the United States, Canada and South America; and via the Pacific satellite to Japan, Australia, China, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Philippines.



Make someone happy . . .

Buzby gets pretty busy around election time, as supervisor Jo Redding knows. "Our incoming calls almost double in the immediate pre-election period and on polling day," she said. "We may be asking some of the 'old girls' to come back and help us out."

Jo is still smiling in spite of the fact that this is the first election where her efficient team of telephonists won't be taking down the results. The computer has moved in.

Somewhere to stay . . .

Local hotels, including the Regent Crest, The Berners and St. George's, are likely to increase their business on the night of June 9 — already Geoff O'Brien and Trisha Weir have booked more than 50 rooms. Except where programmes have existing arrangements, all requests for Abbey Cars must also be channelled through Geoff and Trisha on ext. 2392.

Don't forget the Rennies . . .

One thousand snack boxes and packed meals, 175 gallons of coffee (4,500 cups), 25 gallons of soup and 1,500 filled rolls are on the menu for the election results programme. The staff restaurant is likely to be open for extended hours and the catering team are expecting to serve 1,500 meals there.

During transmission, victuals will be provided at regular intervals for those unable to leave their post; and on Friday, a full meal will be supplied to those with two hands available, but suitable food will be arranged for those with only one hand to spare. Managers need to estimate accurately how many there will be in each category and where they should be served.

It's telephones galore . . .

Ron Nelmes has arranged for an additional 32 direct telephone lines to be fed into ITN House for the election coverage. Twelve of these have been earmarked exclusively for the nationwide results service, with the remaining 20 allocated to staff with specific campaign responsibilities. All will bypass the switchboard. A further 20 internal extensions have been re-allocated for election purposes.

How do you like it . . .

Between 60 and 70 per cent of the ITN technical staff will be working on their first general election.



And one for yourself . . .

It seems that the ITN club bar is equipped to cope with the great election thirst 365 days a year. Asked what arrangements she would be making to cater for the inevitable increase in demand over the election period, manageress Annie Scott showed a modicum of scorn: "You're joking," she said. "We're just holding our normal stock."

Drop Mike a line . . .

Mike Neusten, head of communications, is responsible for all the land lines coming into ITN during The Nation Decides, which includes the entire ITV network. The planning has been a mammoth task and he has been assisted by station engineer Russ Pipe. "We've made hundreds of phone calls and usually lose our voices by midweek" said Mike.

On Days One and Two the station engineers will be in Studio One and Studio Two, as they always are during transmission, as well as in the Boardroom, which is being used by overseas broadcasters.



House services manager Dennis Blurton hands out a coffee to political correspondent David Walter. Catering manageress Cindy Kenyon will be organising the food on election night and coffee lady Maureen Nusa will also be on duty.

Special poll will provide early pointer to election result

Results of a specially-commissioned "exit poll", taken as voters leave the polling booths, will provide ITN viewers with the first detailed analysis — and a prediction of the election result — just seconds after the 10 p.m. voting deadline on June 9.

The poll, conducted exclusively for ITN by Harris Research Centre, provides details from over 10,000 voters at 110 strategically placed polling stations. This information will then be analysed by computer and, if the results of the two previous elections are a guide, ITN will hold in its hands a remarkably accurate assessment of the nation's decision.

This prediction, based upon votes already cast by the electorate, rather than earlier opinion polls based upon "ifs" and "maybes", clearly provides a more realistic pointer to the election result, and will feature strongly in the opening moments of "The Nation Decides".

Early

The first result is anticipated a few minutes before 11 o'clock with something between 550 — 570 of the constituencies declaring before the close of transmission at about 4 a.m. During the main flow it is expected that we shall be receiving up to seven or eight results each minute.

Coverage of the final results will resume at 10 a.m. on June 10, again featuring Burnet, Sissons and Lewis, and will continue with news and interviews with the victors and the vanquished throughout the afternoon until the final result is absolutely clear.

Channel Four will feature an extended news programme on the Friday evening to present an overall election story, and both News at 5.45 and News at Ten will feature extended bulletins, pushing the ITN output during the two days to a total of fifteen hours.



This will be the fourth consecutive general election which Diana Edwards-Jones has directed for ITN with Christine Lomas as her running-mate. The previous occasions were in February and October 1974, and May 1979.

"The most difficult thing in an election is remembering all the lines coming in and being able to recall quickly when they start yelling 'Finchley urgent' that it is coming via the LWT link at Hillcrest — you just don't have time to look these things up," said Di.

Refresher

"I spent hours swotting it all up and everyone's yelling staccato intelligence like 'David Steel's home'. The whole thing is bloody difficult. What do I like most about it? The drink afterwards."

Di is glued to her seat without a break for anything for six to seven hours. "There's one thing I have to do before I have a drink," she flushed.

'DI' IS THE SPIRIT OF THE NIGHT

And what is it like working with Christine? "She is amazingly organised and very bossy. She's excellent I couldn't do it without her, she's got it all sorted out, tells me what to do, runs after me."

"My feeling is that it is such an enormous show the real fright is letting everyone else down. If I make a mess of calling up the lines it shows right through the network," said Di.

Christine Lomas joined ITN as a production assistant in 1966, when Di was one of the people

on her board. "The most difficult part for me is the build up to it," she said, "because if you haven't planned it properly, it can all fall down. It's difficult because Di's office is the control hub of everything that goes on in the pre-transmission build up. If we don't get it right here, it shows on the night. So for me, as the P.A. the programme on the night is relatively easy."

Working with Di? "I love it," said Christine. "I find it both exciting and stimulating. I think she's incredible."



ITN editor David Nicholas with the station engineers and Bobbie Mayes, assignments editor, discussing the campaign and the ITN election results special programme. To the right of Bobbie are Maurice Collis, Mike Gould, David Nicholas, and Steve White. They will all be on duty on June 9 and 10.