

FROM CYRIL SMITH MBE, MP,



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Weeks. 28/1/80

The Prime Minister

Dear Margaret

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The Rochdale Observer is a
free local newspaper - covering
some 7 Parliamentary Constituencies.

It is totally ANTI Labour!

Let Heretics Editorial of today!

I cannot stress too much the
importance and urgency of 704
seeing us!

Cyril Smith

ROCHDALE OBSERVER



MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION
OF NEWSPAPERS

WEDNESDAY 28 MAY 1980

Circulation 27,712

Battle weary

WHEN is a "last resort" a No 1 priority? The question went through the minds of three MPs a fortnight ago when they asked the Prime Minister to meet a deputation from the Lancashire textile industry.

Mrs Thatcher's willingness to meet a deputation personally was expressed in the House of Commons as a response to a question by Rochdale's MP, Cyril Smith.

Her words "... in the last resort I am always willing to receive deputations representing industries as important as textiles" was seized on by Mr Smith and interpreted as a promise.

Mr Smith, in collaboration with Tory MP Nicholas Winterton and Labour's Jack Straw, immediately wrote to Mrs Thatcher saying the "last resort" stage had been reached and asked for a meeting.

Mrs Thatcher has not yet met a deputation. Of course these things take time to arrange. But a fortnight is a long time in the life of the Lancashire textile industry these days.

Mrs Thatcher had been told that three mills had shut down in Rochdale in the last 10 days. That was before the announcement this weekend that John Bright's Moss Mill and Healey Mill would close — bringing the total of textile mill closures in Rochdale this year to seven.

Will more mills close before Mrs Thatcher fulfils her promise to meet local textile leaders? Or — the more important question — will more mills close before she acts to halt the textile decline? Textile unions, managements and workforces are battle weary. We hope they are not all ready to surrender.