

Conservative Research Department

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Box

CROYDON N.W.
BY-ELECTION

Director: ALAN HOWARTH

KB/sgc

Mr Derek Howe
10 Downing Street
London SW1

12th August 1981

Dear Derek,

CROYDON NORTH WEST BY-ELECTION

I thought a copy of the standard background brief for the forthcoming Croydon North West by-election might be of interest. The date of the by-election has not as yet been announced.

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CROYDON NORTH WEST
BACKGROUND BRIEF

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Conservative Research Department
32 Smith Square
London SW1

KB/sg-c
10th August 1981

Croydon North-West By-Election Background Brief

1. Introduction

Up to the present we have had five by-elections during this Parliament in mainland Great Britain (this excludes the Fermanagh and South Tyrone by-election) and none has resulted in a change in the Party holding the seat.

The by-election in Croydon North-West has been caused by the death of the sitting Conservative Member, Robert Taylor, who had held the seat for us since he took it over from the previous Conservative Member at the 1970 General Election. The seat has been held by the Conservatives since it was created in the redistribution of constituency boundaries that preceded the 1955 General Election.

Robert Taylor held the seat for the Conservatives in the May 1979 General Election with a majority of 3,769 (9.3%) over the Labour candidate making Croydon North-West the 71st most marginal Conservative seat in Great Britain. Full details of the May 1979 General Election result in the constituency are shown below:-

MAY 1979 GENERAL ELECTION - WARRINGTON

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Vote</u>	<u>Percentage of Total Votes Cast (%)</u>
Robert Taylor	Conservative	19,928	49.4
Stanley Boden	Labour	16,159	40.1
William Pitt	Liberal	4,239*	10.5
	Majority	3,769	9.3
	Electorate	55,608	
	Turnout	72.5%	
	* - Lost Deposit		

The Liberal candidate in the May 1979 General Election (William Pitt) who is almost certain to stand again for the Liberals in the forthcoming by-election lost his deposit - making the third deposit the Liberals have lost in the seat since it was created before the 1955 General Election. Robert Taylor increased his majority of 1,479 (3.9%) in the October 1974 General Election to 3,769 (9.3%) in the May 1979 General Election.

Details of the votes obtained by the main parties in the February 1974, October 1974 and May 1979 General Elections are shown below:-

FEBRUARY 1974, OCTOBER 1974 AND MAY 1979 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS - CROYDON NORTH-WEST

<u>Party</u>	<u>February 1974</u>		<u>October 1974</u>		<u>May 1979</u>	
	<u>Vote</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Vote</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Vote</u>	<u>%</u>
Conservative	17,887	42.2	16,035	42.0	19,928	49.4
Labour	14,816	34.9	14,556	38.1	16,159	40.1
Liberal	9,707	22.9	6,563	17.2	4,239*	10.9
National Front	-	-	1,049*	2.7	-	-
Majority	3,071	7.3	1,479	3.9	3,769	9.3
Electorate	54,779		55,164		55,608	
Turnout	77.4%		69.2%		72.5%	

* Candidate lost deposit

In the October 1974 General Election, the Conservatives obtained 16,035 votes (42.0% of the vote cast). In May 1979 this had increased to 19,928 (49.4%) - an increase of 3,893 votes. Support for Labour also increased from 14,556 (38.1%) in October 1974 to 16,159 (40.1%) in May 1979 - an increase of 1,603 votes. The Liberal vote fell from 6,563 (17.2%) in October 1974 to 4,239 (10.5%) in May 1979 - a drop of 2,324 votes. The Liberal Candidate (William Pitt, who has stood for them in the February 1974, October 1974 and May 1979 General Election) kept his deposit in February 1974 and October 1974 but lost it in May 1979.

The Conservative majority increased from 1,479 (3.9%) in February 1974 to 3,769 (9.3%) in May 1979. The February 1974 majority was the lowest any Conservative member has had in the seat since it was created for the February 1974 General Election. There was a swing of 2.7% from Labour to Conservative in Croydon N.W. which was precisely half of the national swing of 5.2% to us and less than half the 6.4% swing to us in Greater London as a whole.

Turnout increased from 69.2% in October 1974 to 72.5% in May 1979 - the size of the electorate increased from 55,164 to 55,608.

In Greater London the boundaries of Parliamentary constituencies correspond to the boundaries of the seats for the Greater London Council. In the 1981 G.L.C. election in Croydon North West the Conservatives successfully kept control of the seat despite a swing of 14.2% to Labour when compared with the results of the previous G.L.C. election in the seat (1977).

Details are given below:-

G.L.C. Results Croydon North West 1977 and 1981

<u>Party</u>	<u>1977</u>		<u>1981</u>	
	<u>Vote</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Vote</u>	<u>%</u>
Conservative	13,668	60.4	10,891	44.9
Labour	6,479	28.7	10,072	41.6
Liberal	1,575	7.0	2,878	11.9
National Front	604	2.7	395	1.6
Others	277	1.2	-	-
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Majority	7,189	31.7	819	3.3
Electorate	55,002		55,234	
Turnout	41.2%		43.9%	

On a turnout that increased from 41.2% in 1977 to 43.9% in 1981, the Conservative majority fell from 7,189 (31.7%) in 1977 to 819 (3.3%) in 1981 - a drop of 6,370. William Pitt who stood for the Liberals in the 1981 G.L.C. elections increased the Liberal share of the vote from 7.0% (1,575) in 1977 to 11.9% (2,878) in 1981.

2. General Election Results in Croydon North West

Year	Conservative		Labour		Liberal		Other		Con	Turnout
	Vote	%	Vote	%	Vote	%	Vote	%	maj	
1955	26,297	56.9	15,760	34.1	4,139*	9.0	-	-	10,537	77.5
1959	25,111	54.8	14,658	32.0	6,061	13.2	-	-	10,453	78.8
1964	19,577	46.9	13,967	33.5	8,201	19.6	-	-	5,610	74.4
1966	18,578	45.4	15,882	38.8	6,466*	15.8	-	-	2,696	74.4
1970	19,260	49.9	14,687	38.0	4,666*	12.1	-	-	4,573	67.7
1974F	17,887	42.2	14,816	34.9	9,707	22.9	-	-	3,071	77.4
1974O	16,035	42.0	14,556	38.1	6,563	17.2	1,049*	2.7	1,479	69.2
1979	19,928	49.4	16,159	40.1	4,239*	10.5	-	-	3,769	72.5

* Lost Deposit

3. By-Elections Since May 1979

Excluding the by-election in Fermanagh and South Tyrone there have only been five Parliamentary by-elections since the 1979 General Election and in none has there been a change in the party holding the seat. By-elections have taken place in two seats held by the Conservatives in May 1979 (Hertfordshire South West and Southend East) and in three held by Labour (Manchester Central, Glasgow Central and Warrington). In two cases (Southend East and Glasgow Central) the by-election was caused by the death of the sitting Member, in one case due to the Member becoming a Peer (Manchester Central), in one due to the resignation of the sitting Member due to ill-health (Hertfordshire South West) and in one case due to the appointment of the sitting Member as a Judge (Warrington). Details of the by-elections results in these constituencies are shown below:-

BY-ELECTIONS SINCE MAY 1979

	CON VOTE (%)	LAB VOTE (%)	LIB/SDP VOTE (%)	OTH VOTE (%)	SNP VOTE (%)	WINNING PARTY (MAJORITY)	TURNOUT %	NOTES
<u>Manchester Central</u>								
May 1979 G.E.	4,413 (22.1)	14,117 (70.8)	1,052* (5.3)	365* (1.8)	-	LAB (9,704)	63.7	Swing 5% to Labour
By-election 27.9.79	1,275* (12.0)	7,494 (70.7)	1,502 (14.2)	328* (3.1)	-	LAB (5,992)	33.6	
<u>Hertfordshire S.W.</u>								
May 1979 G.E.	33,112 (54.7)	16,784 (27.7)	9,808 (16.2)	839* (1.4)	-	CON (16,328)	79.7	Swing 4.4%
By-election 13.12.79	17,031 (45.9)	10,259 (27.7)	8,752 (23.6)	1,033* (2.8)	-	CON (6,772)	48.3	to Cons.
<u>Southend East</u>								
May 1979 G.E.	22,413 (56.1)	11,639 (29.1)	5,244 (13.1)	676* (1.7)	-	CON (10,774)	70.1	Swing 12.9%
By-election 13.3.80	13,117 (36.8)	12,687 (35.6)	8,939 (25.1)	894* (3.5)	-	CON (430)	62.5	

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By-Elections Since May 1979 (continued)

	<u>CON</u> VOTE	<u>LAB</u> VOTE	<u>LIB/SDP</u> VOTE	<u>OTH</u> VOTE	<u>SNP</u> VOTE	<u>WINNING</u> PARTY	<u>TURNOUT</u> %	<u>NOTES</u>
<u>Glasgow Central</u>								
May 1979 G.E.	1,937 (16.4)	8,542 (72.5)	-	-	1,308 (11.1)	LAB (6,605)	59.5	-
By-Election 26.6.80	707* (8.8)	4,902 (60.8)	-	337* (4.1)	2,122 (26.3)	LAB (2,780)	42.8	

Warrington

May 1979 G.E.	9,032 (28.8)	19,306 (61.6)	2,833* (9.1)	144 (10.5)	-	LAB (10,274)	71.3	
By-Election	2,102* (7.1)	14,280 (48.4)	12,521+ (42.4)	605 (2.1)	-	LAB (1,759)	67.0	

* Candidate or Candidates lost deposit or deposits
+ SDP Candidate

4. By-Elections 1974-79

Of the 30 by-elections that took place in the 1974-1979 Parliament, ten took place in seats held by Conservative candidates in the October 1974 General Election and the Conservatives successfully defended all these seats. Of the 20 by-elections in seats held by Labour in the October 1974 General Election, 6 by-elections resulted in the gain of the seat by the Conservatives (Woolwich West, Walsall North, Workington, Birmingham Stechford, Ashfield and Ilford North), and in one (Liverpool Edge Hill) the Liberals gained the seat. The average swing from Labour to Conservative in the 27 by-elections that took place in England (i.e. excluding the Glasgow Garscadden, Hamilton, and Berwick and East Lothian by-elections) was 10.5%.

In 1978 there was ten by-elections (Ilford North, Glasgow Garscadden, Lambeth Central, Wycombe, Epsom and Ewell, Hamilton, Manchester Moss Side, Penistone, Pontefract and Castleford, and Berwick and East Lothian.) The swing to the Conservatives in by-elections during 1978 in England was 7.3%. In 1979 up to the General Election there was only three by-elections, in Knutsford, Clitheroe and Liverpool Edge Hill; here the swings to the Conservatives were 11.5%, 9.9% and 8.4% respectively.

The highest swings to the Conservatives were in late 1976 and the first half of 1977 (22.5% in Walsall North, 20.9% in Ashfield, 17.6% in Birmingham Stechford). The Liberals had the biggest swing of all, 32.4% (from Labour) in capturing Edge Hill, Liverpool in March 1979.

BY-ELECTION RESULTS 1974-1979

			<u>Swing</u> <u>to Con</u> %	<u>Con</u> %	<u>Lab</u> %	<u>Lib</u> %	<u>Turnout</u> %
<u>1975</u>							
26.6	Woolwich W	Con gain	7.6	48.8	42.1	5.3	-11.6
				+10.2	-5.0	-9.0	
<u>1976</u>							
4.3	Coventry N.W.	Lab Hold	5.0	37.7	47.7	11.3	- 2.3
				+ 5.8	-4.2	-4.4	
11.3	Carshalton	Con Hold	8.4	51.7	27.5	15.0	-13.8
				+ 6.3	-10.4	-1.7	
11.3	Wirral	Con Hold	13.7	66.0	20.3	11.4	-20.0
				+16.0	-11.3	-6.2	

			<u>Swing</u> <u>to Con</u> %	<u>Con</u> %	<u>Lab</u> %	<u>Lib</u> %	<u>Turnout</u> %
<u>1976 (continued)</u>							
24.6	Rotherham	Lab Hold	13.3	34.7	50.7	7.8	-18.7
				+12.6	-13.9	-5.5	
15.7	Thurrock	Lab Hold	10.7	35.4	45.3	12.2	-14.5
				+11.0	-10.3	-7.8	
4.11	Newcastle C	Lab Hold	13.7	19.7	47.6	29.0	-17.4
				+3.2	-24.2	+17.3	
4.11	Workington	Con Gain	13.1	48.2	45.6	6.2	- 1.6
				+15.9	-10.4	-5.5	
4.11	Walsall N	Con Gain	22.5	43.4	31.6	3.2	-15.1
				+17.3	-27.9	-10.2	
2.12	Cambridge	Con Hold	9.9	51.0	26.0	18.3	-20.4
				+9.8	-10.0	-2.8	
<u>1977</u>							
24.2	City of London	Con Hold	9.3	59.1	19.7	9.8	-13.6
				+7.4	-11.2	-5.1	
31.3	Stechford	Con Gain	17.6	43.4	38.0	8.0	- 5.3
				+15.6	-19.6	-6.6	
28.4	Grimsby	Lab Hold	7.1	45.7	46.9	6.7	+0.4
				+13.8	-0.2	-13.9	
28.4	Ashfield	Con Gain	20.9	43.1	42.5	9.6	-15.6
				+20.8	-20.9	-4.7	
7.7	Saffron Walden	Con Hold	11.7	55.7	14.6	25.2	-13.4
				+12.0	-11.4	-5.1	
18.8	Ladywood	Lab Hold	8.9	28.4	53.1	4.9	-14.3
				+ 6.3	-11.4	-8.5	
25.11	Bournemouth E	Con Hold	8.7	63.4	15.3	13.4	-27.9
				+11.7	-5.7	-11.8	
<u>1978</u>							
2.3	Ilford North	Con Gain	6.9	50.3	38.0	5.0	- 5.4
				+9.4	-4.5	-11.6	
13.4	Garscadden*	Lab Hold	5.6	18.5	45.4	-	- 1.8
				+5.6	-5.5	-	
21.4	Lambeth C	Lab Hold	9.4	34.4	49.4	5.3	- 8.1
				+8.2	-10.7	-7.2	
27.4	Epsom & Ewell	Con Hold	6.2	63.6	16.5	12.8	- 18.9
				+9.5	-2.8	-13.8	
27.4	Wycombe	Con Hold	8.0	60.0	28.5	7.4	- 15.3
				+13.7	-2.3	-12.0	
13.5	Hamilton*	Lab Hold	0.05	13.0	51.0	2.5	- 5.1
				+3.5	+3.4	-1.4	
13.7	Moss Side	Lab Hold	3.5	40.6	46.4	9.2	- 11.3
				+6.3	-0.7	-8.4	
13.7	Penistone	Lab Hold	8.8	32.9	45.4	21.5	- 14.8
				+8.9	-8.7	-0.2	
26.10	Berwick & East Lothian	Lab Hold	-0.75	40.2	47.4	3.6	- 11.9
				+2.6	+4.1	-2.3	
26.10	Pontefract	Lab Hold	7.8	27.2	65.8	7.0	- 22.1
				+11.0	-4.6	-5.3	

<u>1979</u>			<u>Swing</u> <u>to Con</u> %	<u>Con</u> %	<u>Lab</u> %	<u>Lib</u> %	<u>Turnout</u> %
1.3	Clicheroe	Con Hold	9.9	65.0	28.4	6.6	-15.8
				-17.0	-2.8	-14.2	
1.3	Knutsford	Con Hold	11.5	67.1	15.6	15.8	-19.5
				-16.1	-7.0	-10.6	
29.3	Edge Hill*	Lib Gain	8.4	9.4	23.8	64.1	- 4.8
				-11.3	-28.1	-36.8	

* Garscadden	swing to SNP from Lab	3.6%
* Hamilton	swing to Lab from SNP	4.5%
* Berwick & East Lothian	swing to Lab from SNP	4.3%
* Edge Hill	swing to Lib from Lab	32.4%

When Parliament (1974-79) was dissolved, by-elections were pending in Derbyshire N.E., Chipping Barnet, Abingdon, and Batley and Morley.

5. By-Elections 1970-1974

Under the 1970-74 Conservative Government 30 by-elections took place, 9 of which resulted in a change in the Party that had held the seat in the 1970 General Election. The Conservatives lost 5 seats, in by-elections - four to Liberals (Sutton and Cheam, Isle of Ely, Ripon and Berwick and Tweed) and one to Labour (Bromsgrove). Labour gained three seats and lost three seats. They gained Bromsgrove from the Conservatives and Merthyr Tydfil and Southwark from an Independent Labour but lost Rochdale to the Liberals, Lincoln to Democratic Labour and Glasgow Govan to the SNP.

Since the war the Liberals have gained 10 seats at by-elections and lost one - full details are below:-

6. Liberal By-Election Gains Since War

1945 - 1950 NONE

1950 - 1951 NONE

1951 - 1955 NONE

1955 - 1959 ONE GAIN AND ONE LOSS

28th Feb 1957 Liberals lost Carmarthen to Labour

17th March 1958 Conservatives lost Torrington to Liberals

1959 - 1964 ONE GAIN

14th March 1962 Liberals gained Orpington from Conservatives

1964 - 1966 ONE GAIN

24th March 1965 Liberals gained Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles from Conservatives

1966 - 1970 ONE GAIN

26th June 1969 Liberals gain Birmingham Ladywood from Labour

Liberal By-Election Gains Since War (continued)1970 - 1974

FIVE GAINS

26th Oct 1972 Liberals gained Rochdale from Labour
7th Oct 1972 Liberals gained Sutton & Cheam from Conservatives
26th July 1972 Liberals gained Ripon From Conservatives
26th July 1972 Liberals gained Isle of Ely from Conservatives
8th November 1973 Liberals gained Berwick on Tweed from
Conservatives

1974 (F) - 1974 (O)

NONE

1974 - 1979

ONE GAIN

29th March 1979 Liberals gained Liverpool Edge Hill from Labour

Please see following page for analysis of Liberal by-election gains since the War.

ANALYSIS OF LIBERAL BY-ELECTION
GAINS SINCE WAR

	GE Turnout %	By-election Turnout %	Majority GE	Majority By-election	Notes
<u>1955-1959</u>					
Carmathen (28.2.57)	85.1	87.5	3,333 (Lib-Lab)	3,069 (Lib-Lab)	Liberal loss to Labour*
Torrington (27.3.58)	69.2	87.5	9,312 (Con-Lab)	219 (Lib-Con)	Liberal gain from Conservatives**
<u>1959-1964</u>					
Orpington (14.3.62)	82.8	80.3	14,760 (Con-Lab)	7,355 (Lib-Con)	Liberal gain from Conservatives ⁺
<u>1964-1966</u>					
Roxburgh, Selkirk & Peebles (24.3.65)	82.2	82.8	1,739 (Con-Lib)	4,607 (Lib-Con)	Liberal gain from Conservatives ⁺
<u>1966-1970</u>					
Birmingham Ladywood	59.7	51.9	5,315 (Lab-Lib)	2,713 (Lib-Lab)	Liberal gain from Labour =
<u>1970-1974</u>					
Rochdale (12.2.72)	72.8	68.8	5,171 (Lab-Lib)	5,093 (Lib-Lab)	Liberal gain from Labour ⁺
Sutton & Cheam (7.12.72)	67.6	56.3	12,696 (Con-Lab)	7,417 (Lib-Con)	Liberal gain from Conservatives*
Isle of Ely (26.7.73)	71.9	65.8	9,606 (Con-Lab)	1,470 (Lib-Con)	Liberal gain from Conservatives ⁺
Ripon (26.7.73)	73.7	64.3	12,064 (Con-Lab)	946 (Lib-Con)	Liberal gain from Conservatives**
Berwick on Tweed (8.11.73)	73.7	74.8	7,145 (Con-Lab)	57 (Lib-Con)	Liberal gain from Conservatives**
<u>1974(0)-1979</u>					
Liverpool Edge Hill (29.3.79)	61.2	56.6	6,171 (Lab-Lib)	8,133 (Lib-Lab)	Liberal gain from Labour ⁺

* Held by Labour in subsequent General Election

** Regained by Conservatives in subsequent General Election

+ Liberals held in subsequent General Election

= Regained by Labour at subsequent General Election

7. The Social Democrats

The table below based on the results of our private unpublished Gallup tracking studies shows what has happened to support for the main parties since early March 1981. Support for the Social Democrats 'peaked' in early and mid-April and declined to around 10/11 per cent in the period up to the Warrington by-election. Since Warrington there have been strong signs of an upsurge in support for them.

VOTING INTENTION (including don't knows)

	<u>4/9</u> Mar	<u>12/16</u> Mar	<u>18/23</u> Mar	<u>25/30</u> Mar	<u>31 Mar</u> 6 Apr	<u>8/13</u> Apr	<u>15/21</u> Apr	<u>22/27</u> Apr	<u>29 Apr</u> 5 May	<u>6/11</u> May	<u>13/18</u> May	<u>19/26</u> May	<u>26 May</u> 1 June	<u>3/8</u> June
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	27	27	23	27	26	27	26	27	29	29	31	28	28	28
Labour	32	30	31	27	29	31	34	32	31	32	33	35	33	36
Liberal	18	16	15	16	15	13	16	13	15	16	16	14	17	13
Others	3	4	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	3
Social Demo- cratic Party	12	12	17	17	17	17	16	14	12	10	10	11	12	11
Don't know/ it depends	8	11	12	12	10	16	9	12	11	9	8	9	9	10

(Voting Intention including don't knows continued)

	<u>9/15</u> June	<u>16/22</u> June	<u>24/30</u> June	<u>1/6</u> July	<u>8/13</u> July	<u>15/20</u> July
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	27	29	26	27	27	26
Labour	34	33	35½	35	36	32
Liberal	16	14	15	12	13	14
Others	2	2	2	3	3	3
Social Demo- cratic Party	11	11	10½	11	11	15
Don't know/ it depends	10	10	10	11	11	10

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VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC/LIBERAL CANDIDATE

	<u>4/9</u> Mar	<u>12/16</u> Mar	<u>18/23</u> Mar	<u>25/30</u> Mar	<u>31 Mar</u> 6 Apr	<u>8/13</u> Apr	<u>15/21</u> Apr	<u>22/27</u> Apr	<u>29 Apr</u> 5 May	<u>6/11</u> May	<u>13/18</u> May	<u>19/26</u> May	<u>26 May</u> 1 June	<u>3/8</u> June
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	22	20	17	20	20	21	21	22	21	22	24	23	20	21
Labour	24	21	22	19	20	23	24	24	24	22	25	25	25	27
Liberal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
Social Demo- cratic Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Democratic Liberal Alliance	36	37	38	37	35	37	34	33	32	32	32	31	33	32
Don't know/ it depends	17	21	22	22	23	17	20	18	20	22	16	19	19	18

Voting Intention if Social Democratic Candidate (continued)

	<u>9/15</u> June	<u>16/22</u> June	<u>24/30</u> June	<u>1/6</u> July	<u>8/13</u> July	<u>15/20</u> July
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	23	23	21	22	21	21
Labour	28	28	31	29	29	28
Liberal	12	11	11	8	9	11
Others	1	2	1½	2	2	2
Social Demo- cratic Party	20	19	19	20	20	23
SDP/Liberal Alliance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/ it depends	16	16	16½	16	18	16

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VOTING INTENTION IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE

	<u>4/9</u> Mar	<u>12/16</u> Mar	<u>18/23</u> Mar	<u>25/30</u> Mar	<u>31 Mar</u> 6 Apr	<u>8/13</u> Apr	<u>15/21</u> Apr	<u>22/27</u> Apr	<u>29 Apr</u> 5 May	<u>6/11</u> May	<u>13/18</u> May	<u>19/26</u> May	<u>26 May</u> 1 June	<u>3/</u> June
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	22	21	18	21	21	22	22	23	25	23	25	23	21	22
Labour	25	22	22	20	21	24	25	24	25	24	27	26	27	27
Liberal	12	11	11	10	10	10	11	9	10	11	11	10	12	9
Others	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	4	3	2	2	2	2
Social Demo- cratic Party	25	25	27	29	26	27	22	24	21	21	20	21	20	23
Social Democratic Liberal Alliance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/ it depends	16	17	20	20	20	17	19	18	15	18	15	18	17	17

Voting Intention if Social Democratic/Liberal Candidate (continued)

	<u>9/15</u> June	<u>16/22</u> June	<u>24/30</u> June	<u>1/6</u> July	<u>8/13</u> July	<u>15/20</u> July
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	22	24	20	22	20	21
Labour	27	27	29	28	27	27
Liberal	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	1	2	1	2	2	2
Social Demo- cratic Party	-	-	-	-	-	-
SDP/Liberal Alliance	30	28	32	28	31	33
Don't know/it depends	19	19	18	19	19	18

8. The Warrington By-Election

The Warrington by-election held on 16th July was the fifth by-election in Great Britain during this Parliament (this excludes Fermanagh and South Tyrone). It was the first by-election in which a Social Democratic candidate (Roy Jenkins) stood and the third by-election in which the Conservative candidate lost his deposit. Conservative candidates lost their deposits in Manchester Central, Glasgow Central and Warrington. Details of the results are shown on the following page.

WARRINGTON BY-ELECTION (16th July)

Party	General Election		By-Election		Change	
	Vote	%	Vote	%	In Vote	In%
Labour	19,306	61.6	14,280	48.4	-5,026	-13.2
Social Democrat/Liberal	-	-	12,521	42.4	+9,688**	+33.3**
Conservative	9,032	28.8	2,102*	7.1	-6,930	-21.7
Liberal	2,833*	9.1	-	-	-	-
Others	144	0.5	605	2.1	+ 461	+ 1.6
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Majority	10,274	32.8	1,759	6.0	-8,515	-26.8
Turn Out		71.3		67.0		- 4.3
Electorate	43,921		44,465			+544

* Lost Deposit

** Increase from previous Liberal vote.

Labour's majority collapsed from 10,274 (32.8%) at the May 1979 General Election to 1,759 (6%) in the by-election. On a turnout that was only just over 4 per cent less than at the General Election Labour's vote fell from 19,306 (61.6%) to 14,280 (48.4%) - a drop of over 5,000 votes at a point in the electoral cycle when the main opposition party would expect to gain ground in by-elections. The Social Democrat (Roy Jenkins) standing with Liberal support increased the Liberal/Social Democrat vote from 2,833 (9.1%) in May 1979 to 12,521 (42.4%) at the by-election. The Conservative vote dropped from 9,032 (28.8%) in May 1979 to 2,102 (7.1%) at the by-election.

Labour's majority was the lowest they have obtained in Warrington since the war. The result was impressive for the Social Democrats but is not unique. For example, in terms of swing, 23.4% to the Social Democrats from Labour in Warrington was not as great as the swing the Liberals obtained in the Liverpool Edgehill by-election just before the May 1979 General Election. Comparisons with some of the Liberal by-election victories under the 1970-1974 Conservative Government also help to put the result into perspective - the swing to the Liberals (from the Conservatives) in Sutton & Cheam (December 1972) and by Dick Taverne in Lincoln (March 1973) was larger than that obtained from Labour by the Social Democrats in Warrington.

It must be admitted that the Social Democrats did better than either national opinion polls or opinion polls conducted in Warrington would have appeared to have indicated. Opinion polls conducted since the by-election have indicated perhaps the start of an upturn in terms of national support for them. If such a 'bandwagon' effects develop as it did to an extent after Liberal victories under the 1970-74 Conservative Government it could carry important implications for the result of Croydon North West.

9. Opinion Polls in Croydon North West

M.O.R.I. (Daily Star, July 20th 1981)

The result of a M.O.R.I. poll conducted in Croydon North West on 18th July was published in the Daily Star on Monday July 20th. M.O.R.I. found that if an unnamed or Social Democrat stood in the seat the Labour would win it. If Shirley Williams stands M.O.R.I. found she would win the seat from us.

Detailed results are shown below:

M.O.R.I. poll Croydon N.W. - Fieldword 18th July 1981

	<u>General Election Result 1979</u>	<u>Unknown SDP candidate</u>	<u>Shirley Williams as SDP candidate</u>	<u>Unknown Liberal candidate</u>	<u>Pardoe as Liberal candidate</u>
	%	%	%	%	%
Conservative	42	28	25	29	30
Labour	38	43	30	41	44
SDP	-	27	44	-	-
Liberal	17	-	-	29	24
Other	3	2	1	1	2

M.O.R.I. found that 33% of electors who voted Conservative in May 1979 would switch to voting for Shirley Williams as would 44% of Labour voters.

M.O.R.I. also asked a series of image questions in Croydon N.W. and found 53% of electors thought we are out of touch with ordinary people. Details of the main image questions are shown below.

Image of the Parties - Croydon N.W.

	<u>Con</u>	<u>Lab</u>	<u>SDP</u>
	%	%	%
Out of touch with ordinary people	53	18	8
Has good leader	21	14	24
Divided among themselves	18	45	6
Good policies on council spending	18	18	8
Too extremist	17	33	3
Good policies on riots/inner cities	17	10	7
Would keep its election promises	12	15	14
Respects all classes	10	16	26
Good policies on unemployment	8	28	12
Understands problems facing people in this area	12	21	14
None of these/don't know	8	10	44

8. Balance of Strength in the House of Commons

The state of the parties in the House of Commons as a result of the 1979 General Election compared with the position after the February 1974 and October 1974 General Election is as follows:-

	After February 1974 General Election	After October 1974 General Election	After May 1979 General Election
Conservative	296	276	339
Labour	301	319	268
Liberal	14	13	11
Plaid Cymru	2	3	2
Scottish Nationalist Party	7	11	2
The Speaker	1	1	1
Independent Labour	1	-	-
Democratic Labour	1	-	-
Ulster Unionist*	7	6	5
Social Democratic & Labour	1	1	1
Democratic Unionist Party	1	1	3
Vanguard Unionists Progressive Party	3	3	-
Independent Republican	-	1	1
Other Ulster Unionists**	-	-	2
	<u>635</u>	<u>635</u>	<u>635</u>

* Official Unionists in May 1974

** One Ulster Unionist and one United Ulster Unionist

11. The Constituency of Croydon North West

Croydon North West is one of the four constituencies in the London Borough of Croydon, all of which are currently Conservative held both for Parliament and for the G.L.C.

The constituency is mainly a 'dormitory' for London commuters and as such all the standard commuter problems (high fares, poor services) are relevant.

There is a strong Catholic vote, particularly in Upper Norwood and part of Upper Norbury Wards. In addition, there is a substantial Asian population in West Thornton and Bershaw Manor Wards, plus a mixture of West Indian and Asian groups in Whitestone Manor Ward.

It is understood that important local issues include immigration, law and order (there was a skinhead murder in the constituency in June), unemployment and traffic on the A23.