Prime Minister

BIRMINGHAM NORTHFIELD BY ELECTION - (Conservative Majority
                                                        204)

1. We need, please, to have your decision, tonight,
    about the date of the Northfield By-Election. *focus one*

2. The Labour Party has decided to hold the By-Election
    in Peckham (Labour majority 10,811) on Thursday,
    28th October. The Alliance candidate is Dick Taverne.
    Our candidate at Peckham is John Redford.

3. The choise for Northfield rests between 28th October
    and 4th November.

4. Herewith copy letter of today's date from Cecil Parkinson
    together with key dates in October/November.

5. Both Cecil and I think that the balance of advantage
    rests with 28th October, not least because a good SDP
    result in Peckham could be more damaging to us than
    to the Labour Party if poling in Northfield was to
    be on 4th November.

6. Do you agree that the Northfield By-Election could be
    held on 28th October?

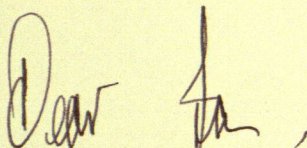29.9.82   IAN GOW

CEP/AP   29th September, 1982

Dear ___,

As I said on the telephone this afternoon, I had a very useful
meeting this morning with Roger Gale, the Candidate for the
Northfields By Election, and with the Constituency Chairman
and Agent together with the Directors from Central Office
and the Central Office Agent.

Roger Gale will, I think, prove a good candidate for us. He
has a good political knowledge, is personable and his experience
in television should stand him in good stead with the media. A
copy of his biography is attached.

A good deal of work has already been put in to the organisation
of the campaign. A team of agents are standing by in readiness
and arrangements have been made for the By Election Headquarters,
office equipment including offset lithos and a word processor
have been assembled. A survey of the constituency has been
completed and the first of a series of In Touch leaflets hand
delivered (copy attached). We went through plans for meetings,
publicity, Central Office help etc this morning and talked about
the issues and style of the campaign.

We are therefore ready to start campaigning and we now need to
decide when Polling Day should be. The options seem to be
either Thursday 28th October or Thursday 4th November, and the
pros and cons are as follows:

Thursday 28th October
Same day as Peckham.
The SDP Conference would be taking place during the first week
of campaigning i.e. week beginning 11th October.
Unemployment figures will be published on 26th October.
The International Motor Show starts at Birmingham on 20th October
and will feature a campaign for greater import control on foreign
produced motor cars.
The Labour Party have a PPB booked for 27th October.

Thursday 4th November
Would be one week after Peckham result where Dick Taverne might
do well.
Is the day after the Queen's Speech.
Means delaying start of the Campaign until Monday 18th October.

Attached is a summary of event taking place in October and November
and a copy of the Constituency profile.

                                            ..../

There are strong arguments for going on the 28th October and
our own people seem to be reasonably well prepared.

If it is to be the 28th October then it will need to be
gazetted on Friday next October 1st and this means giving
the customary warning to the Whips of the other parties
tomorrow, Thursday 30th September.

You did kindly say that you would put this to the Prime
Minister and I look forward to hearing from you in the
morning.

Yours Ever,

A.
Cecil.

Ian Gow, Esq., MP.,

Oct. contd.

15	INDEX OF RETAIL PRICES.
15	SDP CONFERENCE, Great Yarmouth (to 16).
18	HOUSE OF COMMONS RETURNS.
18	EC: Finance and Agriculture Councils, Luxembourg.
19	PLAID CYMRU CONFERENCE (to 21).
20	Prime Minister opens new Bank of Scotland Premises.
20	ELECTIONS TO NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY.
20	International Motor Show, Birmingham.
20	Institute of Personnel Management Conference, Harrogate.
24	Clocks go back.
25	EC: Foreign Affairs Council (to 25), Luxembourg.
25	European Parliament, Strasbourg (to 29).
26	UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES.
27	Prime Minister talks with Prime Minister of Luxembourg.
27	TUC General Council; Labour Party National Executive.
28	PRIME MINISTER'S BILATERAL WITH CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT, BONN (to 29).
28 or 29	Parliament rises.

NOVEMBER

1	Pay settlement dates for NUM and BL.
2	Official reserves.
2	CHANNEL 4 OPENS.
3	QUEEN'S SPEECH.
3	Prime Minister's talks with Prime Minister of Swaziland.
4	BILATERAL WITH PRESIDENT MITTERRAND, PARIS (to 5).
9	CGBR.
10	NEDC.
10	Prime Minister's talks with Emir of Qatar (or 24 Nov).
11	PRIME MINISTER ATTENDS ROYAL ACADEMY CENTENARY DINNER.
12	INDEX OF RETAIL PRICES.
13	Lord Mayor's Show.
13	Prime Minister's speech at British Legion.
14	Remembrance Sunday.
15	PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH, LORD MAYOR'S BANQUET.
16	Visit of Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands (to 18).
17	PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH TO NORTH ATLANTIC ASSEMBLY, LONDON.
18	Presentation of Humble Address to Queen.

Nov. contd.

19	PRIME MINISTER'S REGIONAL TOUR OF CORNWALL AND WEST COUNTRY.
23	UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES.
23	GATT MINISTERIAL MEETING (to 26).
24	TUC General Council; Labour Party National Executive.
26	PRIME MINISTER'S ST. ANDREW'S NIGHT DINNER SPEECH, GLASGOW.
29	Annual Conference of British/Irish Association, Lambeth Palace.
30	Deadline for settlement of EC Budget problem
late	ECONOMIC FORECASTS/PUBLIC EXPENDITURE STATEMENT BY CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER.

DECEMBER

2	Official reserves.
3	EUROPEAN COUNCIL, COPENHAGEN (to 4).
6	WPI.
8	PRIME MINISTER OPENS CONFERENCE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, BARBICAN.
9	CGBR.
15	Association of University Teachers' conference, Bradford (to 17).
17	PRIME MINISTER'S SOUTH EASTERN TOUR.
17	INDEX OF RETAIL PRICES.
21	UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES.
22	TUC General Council; Labour Party Executive.
24	Recess.
By 31 Dec.	FRANKS REPORT ON HANDLING OF FALKLAND ISLANDS.