



10 DOWNING STREET

1 December, 1980

Dear John,

Many thanks for your letter of November 27 re "the lost year". Alas, our advice is not always taken! However, I should not worry much about this. The Prime Minister is quite relaxed about it. I believe she agrees with Sir Keith but for the sake of the Government and confidence in it does not say so.

Regards.

Jim Ingham
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Bernard Ingham Esq
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27 November 1980

Dear *Bernard*,

Thank you for copying to me the transcript of the Prime Minister's interview with Michael Charlton. I have drawn Sir Keith's attention to Charlton's question on "the lost year" and the Prime Minister's reply. I understand the Prime Minister had to face a question on the subject in the House today.

I may say that when Sir Keith first "went public" on this in an interview for "The Director" magazine, I suggested we delete it from the draft on the grounds that not all Cabinet Ministers would agree with him, at least in public. He felt strongly however that it should be said. It was left in and, as you know, on a political platform in Basingstoke last weekend he repeated it. Several newspapers took it up - there was a leader in the Daily Mail and Hugh Stephenson had a piece in Tuesday's Times, where he commended Sir Keith for his "open honest in failure", but suggested that such unaccustomed honesty from politicians tended to undermine confidence.

I relay this simply to illustrate that Ministers are not always mindful of the advice they are given. He generally accepts our view, but he clearly feels very strongly on this point.

Kind regards,
John Woodrow
JOHN WOODROW

*Expensive - please
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