

Main points arising from the Directors and Management Meetings at Conservative Central Office on 5th and 6th February 1980

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1. Southend

- (a) A final choice by the middle of next week. Six left. They are:- Teddy Taylor, Gerald Howarth, a protege of Norris McWhirter's, Mr Attfield, a local man. Michael Clark, Marketing Manager, fought Ilkeston May 1979. Councillor Sam Swerling, contested Nottingham East Oct 1974, Lawyer. Colin Mitchell.
- (b) The local Association doesn't exist in any normal shape or form. No 1979 Canvass. No Agent. Robin Nelder, a Deputy Central Office Agent for Eastern Area has been drafted in.
- (c) A leaflet for early distribution has not yet been agreed.
- (d) 238 people approached in survey canvass. 49% Conservative. 21% doubtful. 15% Labour. 9% Liberal. Rather meaningless.
- (e) In spite of Liberal attempts to localise the Election (eg train fares) the Chairman believes that it will be fought on national issues. Indeed early indications from the constituency show this to be the case.

- 2. There are now 4 outstanding GLC By-Elections.
- 3. Since May 1979 of our 43 losses in local government by-elections, 23 have been to Labour, 20 to the Liberals.
- 4. The leader in the Sun today (February 6th) on the Cabinet unquestionably reflects Central Office thinking. Our tracking research shows us neck and neck with Labour but fast losing support of the non trade union working class.
- 5. Mr Du Cann and the Chairman again expressed strong reservations about the effectiveness of the Paymaster General's Office and Whitehall in general to time and present Government policies and views properly. There was a long discussion on this subject, Sir Charles Johnston added his endorsement from the voluntary side of the Party.

6. (a) Sir Charles Johnston has just returned from Scotland where he was impressed by George Younger's arguments about the extra number of people in jobs compared with a year ago in spite of rising unemployment. 1
- (b) Sir Charles found many farmers disquietened by "the Prime Minister's belief that they all drove round in Rolls Royces. There are small farmers in marginal constituencies".

Richard

6th February 1980