



10 DOWNING STREET

Personal and
Confidential.

13th May, 1981

Thank you so much for your thoughtful letter of 11th May, which I have shown to the Prime Minister.

On her instructions, I have sent a copy to the Chairman of our Party.

Ian Gow

Dr. John Patten, N.P.

cc: The Rt. Hon. the Lord Thorneycroft, CH.

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JOHN PATTEN, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th May, 1981

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

I. Gow Esq. MP,
The Private Secretary to the
Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON. SW1

John Law

After the very useful meeting for Junior Ministers on 6th May, we discussed the possibility that we should do more to produce a vision of what the Government is doing in the home and social fields that is coherent and appealing; indeed the Prime Minister herself, in her brief introductory remarks stressed the need for concentration on achievements and policies in education, housing and similar fields in the coming years.

The first things which the Government had to concentrate on getting right were the economy, our standing in the world, our defence, and law and order. With those priorities clearly established, and with considerable momentum now behing them, perhaps they need to be balanced in the public mind, and in our policies, by a comprehensive presentation of, and integrated approach to, home and social affairs.

All of us could produce a check list of what we are doing in these areas - the promotion of educational standards and choice of council house sales; the encouragement of private health schemes; and many more - but to me, at least, they are not knitted together: I am sure that the public do not perceive them as a whole, and distinctly Tory, set of achievements either.

The Socialists have their motif of "equality" which at least expresses what they are after in these fields; we do not have any such precise equivalent and probably with our concern for the individual should not have one in any event. Yet we must give our concern for the individual and what we are doing for the individual, coherent flesh and bones.

I think one possibility could be to have a Cabinet Minister of seniority, who carries weight, put in charge of tying all these ends together in terms of Government policy, and then telling

the electorate. Perhaps a strong character with responsibilities for a major Department of State could do it; or perhaps it should be someone without specific departmental responsibilities, possibly combining the task with being Party Chairman. Whatever the means, I believe that the achievement of these ends is one of some urgency.

This note does not require a reply: I simply thought that it might be worthwhile setting down on paper some thoughts I had already voiced to you in person.

Yrs. luv,
John.