



FINSBERG MP

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

25th November 1981

Thank you for your letter of 20th November together with the enclosed press release which I read last weekend.

I thought you made some very effective points. I do so agree with you that we must keep on hammering away on the narrow point that the SDP are both a Party of the Left and overwhelmingly socialist. I do not need to tell you how difficult it is to hit such a shadowy target when they are so reluctant to spell out their detailed policies. However, that day will come and when it does we must never miss a single opportunity to expose them for what they are.

Keep up the good work.

Geoffrey Finsberg Esq MBE JP MP

MR. HOWE

I have acknowledged the attached letter from Geoffrey Finsberg, but I think that it is probably for the Political Office to suggest a reply.

MAQ

23 November 1981



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

23 November 1981

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to acknowledge your letter of 20 November. I will place it before her at once and you will be sent a reply as soon as possible.

M. A. PATTISON

Geoffrey Finsberg, Esq., M.B.E., J.P., M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

20th November 1981

Dear Prime Minister

R21/11

I wonder if I might suggest to you that I think we are being too kind to the Social Democrats by calling them the S.D.P. You and I know exactly what that means but in spite of all we try to do I am not sure the general public sees them in the same light.

Could we not call them the A.S.P. - Alternative Socialist Party - and make it clear that many of their policies are socialist and that most of their leaders have consistently voted for socialist measures in Parliament.

I do not in any way pretend that I have anything like the answer but you might be interested to see the attached.

as was
Geoffrey
GEOFFREY FINSBERG

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister's Office,
10, Downing Street,
SW1

Conservative Central Office

NEWS SERVICE

Release time: 20.00 hours/THURSDAY, 19th NOVEMBER, 1981 913/81

Extract from a speech by Geoffrey FINSBERG, MP, (Camden, Hampstead) Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Department of Health & Social Security, speaking to the Wanstead and Woodford Super Club at Gants Hill, on Thursday, 19th NOVEMBER 1981

THE A S P IS STILL A SNAKE

Why do we, as Conservatives, refer to the SDP as Social Democrats when we know that they are really the Alternative Socialist Party.

A S P is far more accurate and sounds less cuddly than the S D P which makes one think of the West German model. How wrong we are so to do.

The leading members of our Alternative Socialist Party voted for the extreme left-wing measures of the Wilson/Callaghan Governments on Nationalisation and measures to increase the powers of the Trade Unions. At least one, Shirley Williams, was on the infamous Grunwick picket line.

They seem quite willing to attack private education, to consider removing tax relief on mortgages for owner-occupiers and to introduce a Wealth Tax. Those Conservatives who are thinking of joining this new Party must ask themselves if they wish to subscribe to this brand of Socialism or if they wish to remain with the Party of free-enterprise.

Cleopatra may have found the asp useful but to-day, it is merely the sloughed-off skin of Foot's Socialist Party, but let us forget all about Anthony and Cleopatra and concentrate on the definition of an asp which is a venomous serpent - to be precise, a hooded venomous serpent.

END