

Parkinson

STRICTLY
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23rd December 1981

Thank you so much for your letter of 17th December about Bermondsey, together with its enclosures.

This I have read with a great deal of interest.

I am very glad that we have adopted a candidate there, although it looks as if the by-election may be a little delayed.

Will you or Michael be seeing our candidate, because if he is a really energetic person, this would be exactly the kind of occasion on which he could do some real work in order to try to build up the organisation, which appears to be virtually non-existent at present.

Please tell our candidate that if he would like me to come down and canvass for new members one evening, I would be delighted to do so.

IAN GOW

The Rt Hon Cecil Parkinson MP

From
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY
The Rt. Hon. Cecil Parkinson M.P.

CONSERVATIVE & UNIONIST CENTRAL OFFICE,
32 SMITH SQUARE,
WESTMINSTER, SW1P 3HH,
Telephone: 01-222 9000

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CEP/caw

17 December, 1981

Dear Sir,

I just thought you would like to see the preliminary work that is going on here

as Bernard
Yours truly,
Iain

Iain Gow, Esq., M.P.

Enc.

Conservative and Unionist Central Office

32 Smith Square Westminster SW1P 3HH Telephone 01-222 9000

14 DEC 1981

Memorandum from: ... A.S. Garner

To: The Chairman

Date: 11th December 1981

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Bermondsey

Attached is Donald Stringer's preliminary report on Bermondsey.

Could you please keep this strictly confidential.



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PRELIMINARY REPORT

SOUTHWARK BERMONDSEY

PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTION

DONALD STRINGER, CENTRAL OFFICE AGENT, GREATER LONDON

1 CAUSE OF BY ELECTION

Resignation of Labour MP, The Rt Hon Robert Mellish MP

2 GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

May 1979 (Electorate 51,246)

R J Mellish (Lab)	19,338	63.6
A Duma (Con)	7,582	24.9
J Taylor (Lib)	2,072	6.8
J Smith (NF)	1,175	3.9
A Moore (WRP)	239	0.8

Lab Majority 11,756

Total Poll 30,406
Poll 59.3% Swing to Conservative 10.4%

October 1974 (Electorate 54,904)

R J Mellish (Lab)	22,875	73.4
H E Flight (Con)	4,294	13.8
J Taylor (Lib)	2,520	8.1
G Davey (NF)	1,488	4.8

Lab Majority 18,581

Total Poll 31,177
Poll 56.4% Swing to Labour 3.9%

February 1974 (Electorate 54,930) MAJOR REDISTRIBUTION

R J Mellish (Lab)	24,847	68.6
H E Flight (Con)	6,126	16.9
C Hewittson (Lib)	3,751	10.3
G Davey (NF)	1,485	4.1

Lab Majority 18,721

Total Poll 36,209
Turnout 65.9%

3 GLC ELECTION RESULTS

May 1981 (Electorate 51,169)

G Nicholson (Lab)	12,000	66.0
S Hughes (Lib)	2,914	16.0
N Mearing-Smith (Con)	2,444	13.4
J Sneath (NF)	830	4.6

Lab Majority 9,056

Total Poll 18,188 Swing Con to Lab 5.1
Turnout 35.7 swing Con to Lib 10.5%

May 1977 (Electorate 53,386)

Sir Reginald Goodwin CBE DL (Lab)	10,980	63.7
A A Duma (Con)	3,661	21.3
J S Sneath (NF)	1,515	
Mrs R A Sandford (Lib)	499	2.9
R Gordon (Comm)	334	
Mrs L E Clifford (NP)	239	others 12.1
<hr/>		
Lab Majority	7,319	
Total Poll 17,228 no change		
Poll 32.27%		

4 BOROUGH COUNCIL

Bermondsey is one of 3 Parliamentary constituencies comprising the London Borough of Southwark. The other two being Dulwich and Peckham.

Current state of Parties on the Council

Con	7
Lab	43
SDP	14

Elected Councillors for Bermondsey are

Lab	21
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Results in Bermondsey wards in 1978 Borough Elections
(Top vote for each Party in each ward)

	No of seats	Top Con	Top Lab	Top Other
ABBEY	2	346	1,076	53
BRICKLAYERS	2	417	1,111	
BROWNING	3	559	1,201	
CATHEDRAL	2	387	1,035	
CHAUCER	3	689	1,420	
DOCKYARD	3	383	1,468	
RIVERSIDE	3	477	1,672	
ROTHERHITHE	3	373	1,206	
	21	3,631	10,189	53

5 CONSTITUENCY WARD BACKGROUND

There are eight wards in Bermondsey

Abbey

No Conservative contact.

Bricklayers

Mr and Mrs Morgan active workers but ageing

Browning

No contact

Cathedral

No contact

Chaucer

Miss Betty North Association Treasurer, collects money but not active.

Dockyard

Rev Percy Guy, Rector St Crispins. The Association holds its meetings at the Vicarage.

Riverside

Miss Mitchell, Vice Chairman, waiting to retire.
Mr Padmore active worker.

Rotherhithe

Charles Hayward (Chairman) and Ruby Hayward MBE (Hon Secretary) respectively of Bermondsey Association. Both wishing to retire from active service.

6 SELECTION AND ADOPTION OF PROSPECTIVE PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE

The following timetable has been agreed:

Monday 2nd November	Paper selection
Monday 23rd November	Selection Committee
Tuesday 15th December	Adoption meeting

Mr Howard Flight has been selected and will be adopted for the by-election only on Tuesday 15th December. Mr Flight fought the seat in February and October 1974.

7 THE ASSOCIATION

Bermondsey Conservative Association is virtually non-existent as an organisation and as a campaigning unit. The 'paper' membership is under 100 and the activists number about eight at the most.

The Association, such as it is, has been kept going by Mrs Ruby Hayward MBE as Hon Secretary and as election agent in many elections. She is now well over 60 and has been seriously ill for the past two years. Her husband, Charles, is the Association Chairman but he too is over 60 and anxious to retire from active politics.

Both will help as much as they can in the By-election, although Mrs Hayward may well be difficult.

In addition to the Haywards, there are four or five other members who will give limited assistance.

It must be clearly understood that any work which has to be done between now and the calling of the By-election can only be done by bringing in help from outside - and that goes for the By-election campaign itself.

8 THE AGENT

Eighteen months ago, we caused the three Constituency Associations within the Borough to come together and appoint a Borough Agent - that is Dulwich, Peckham and Bermondsey. With the aid of a grant from the Central Office, an Agent was appointed - Miss Rose Freeman. She appears to have settled in reasonably well, although she lacks experience. It must also be said that she has had to devote herself largely to the marginal seat of Dulwich. She will need constant support and guidance in the By-election.

9 HEADQUARTERS

There is no Constituency office. The correspondence address is Mr and Mrs Haywards' flat in a tower block.

Howard Flight is seeking suitable accommodation from which we could fight the By-election, and the whole campaign will be managed from one headquarters. We shall not have any ward committee rooms.

10 FINANCE

The Association has very little money and only limited money raising potential. My Area Chairman will, as usual, make an appeal to the other 91 constituency Associations in London. (At Croydon North West, this raised just over £1,000) With a legal maximum of approximately £2,300, there will be a considerable shortfall.

11 MUTUAL AID

Almost the whole of the deliveries of literature, survey canvass, election canvassing etc. will have to be undertaken by mutual aid from other constituencies. I shall have my Deputy Chairman - Mrs C A Prendergast and one of my Vice Chairmen - Leslie Caldwell to organise this.

Two serious problems will have to be overcome. The first is that a large part of the Bermondsey constituency is in the dockland area of London where muggings, hooliganism and vandalism are rife; canvassing and delivery will have to be done by teams rather than by ones and twos, and wherever possible, we must aim to do deliveries in daylight. There is no point in under-estimating this problem.

The other problem is that on 6th May 1982, vitally important elections take place in all of the 32 London Boroughs. Even the so called safe Conservative Boroughs are very nervous about these elections and if the by-election is called later than early March, we shall be faced with considerable reluctance of constituencies to send mutual aid teams to Bermondsey, which they will see as a lost cause.

12 . PRE-BY-ELECTION LEAFLETTING

We are now in the course of producing an 'In Touch' newsletter which will be Southwark based, in that it will be a 'lead in' to the Borough elections. We are featuring in the newsletter the iniquities of Southwark's Labour Council, some Government good news and a feature about Howard Flight's adoption. Delivery of this newsletter will take place the first week in January and the subsequent editions will be produced every fortnight.

I have assembled a production team and the job will be finished at the end of this week (18th December).

13 SURVEY CANVASS

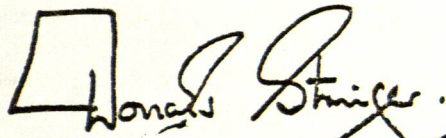
We intend to mount a Survey Canvass - probably on the basis of one in every 100 electors, (About 500 interviews) at the end of January.

14 BY-ELECTION TEAM

An effective central team will be needed, probably on the following lines:

Election Agent	Rose Freeman
Central Office Agent	Donald Stringer
D COA	David Simpson
Press Officer	Arthur Williamson (our GLC Press Officer)
Research Officer	Keith Britto (if possible please!)
Mutual Aid	Mrs Prendergast
	Leslie Caldwell
Canvassing/Delivery	(An Agent)
Candidates Aide	(An Agent)
Meetings, Special interest groups & general duties	(An Agent)

(My choice of Agents will be limited because I cannot use any of the same team that I used at Croydon, nor can I use any of the Borough co-ordinating Agents who will be heavily engaged in preparations for the Borough elections.)

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald Stinger". To the left of the name is a small, hand-drawn square box.

10-XII-81.