

Ancram

30th December, 1982

Private & Confidential

Queen's Park By-Election

In his report to the Prime Minister on the Queen's Park By-Election at the beginning of this month, Michael Ancram wrote as follows:-

"The Scottish Ministerial team have played a full part, and the Secretary of State has attended twice, once at a meeting and once at a Press Conference.

Help from other Members of the Cabinet has been most disappointing. Despite strenuous efforts on the part of both Central Offices, the only Cabinet Minister who was available was Leon Brittan, whose meeting had to be cancelled because of a division in Parliament on Thursday 25th November, which the Government won by over 50 votes! A further meeting had to be re-arranged because of another division.

The lack of support from the Cabinet has been inevitably noticed and remarked upon by the Press and Media, and has been most unhelpful. It is certain that this is damaging to the Party as a whole, is damaging to any campaign, and is demoralising to the Candidate who has, in this instance, put a brave face on it. It is to be hoped that, in the future, however difficult or unhelpful a by-election might appear, a considerably greater degree of Cabinet support will be forthcoming."

The Prime Minister does, of course, understand your difficulties only too well.

Nevertheless, she did ask me to have a word with you about this aspect of Michael Ancram's report to her.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Cecil Parkinson.

IAN GOW

The Right Honourable Michael Jopling, M.P.
12 Downing Street

c.c. The Rt. Hon. Cecil Parkinson, M.P.