

PRIME MINISTER

SCOTLAND

I attach a letter from Bill Walker who has written to you bitterly criticising the Party organisation in Scotland and particularly attacking the appointment of Michael Hirst to organise the European Election campaign in Scotland. He states that if Michael Hirst comes to his constituency, he will publicly attack him.

I have talked to Mark about this and we feel that you probably should see Bill Walker in the New Year in order to tell him that it is essential we work together. In the meantime, Mark is going to have a word with the Chief Whip and I attach a draft reply.

On the question of Scotland, I had a long talk to Michael Forsyth a few days ago. His analysis is actually not dissimilar to Bill Walker's although he did not put it in such terms. He supports Lord Goold, but is highly critical of the rest of Scottish Central Office and says there is still no drive or enthusiasm there.

Eighteen months after the election we are still not making visible progress in scotland. Andrew Dunlop of the Policy Unit is intending to spend a couple of days in Scotland in the New Year in order to examine the problem in more detail. Following his report, we should perhaps get in Lord Goold and Malcolm Rifkind together to discuss his conclusions.

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JOHN WHITTINGDALE

16.12.88