

Prime Minister

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Ferdie Mount thinks we should not agree to electrification, as proposed by BR and Dept of Transport. Alan Walters powerfully supports this view (Flag C). Ian Gow, having

Dr Scholar

HASTINGS & TONBRIDGE RAILWAY LINE

carried out the consultation you asked him to do, recommends in favour of electrification.

1. Thank you for your Note of yesterday's date, which I return, plus the file. Agree to electrification, or should I
2. I have spoken to:- write as at X in Ferdie's note?
 - (a) Kenneth Warren (Hastings) who is very strongly MS 13/4 in favour of electrification; who says that there is intense local feeling on the matter; and that failure to electrify would be electorally damaging to him in his constituency.
 - (b) John Stanley (Tonbridge & Malling) who says that the line must be kept open and that he would prefer electrification.
 - (c) Patrick Mayhew (Royal Tunbridge Wells) who spoke with real intensity of feeling in favour of early electrification. He says that there is the strongest feeling in the constituency about this and he would be dismayed if electrification did not proceed.
3. I understand (although I have not spoken to them) that Geoffrey Johnson Smith and Bryant Godman Irvine also feel very strongly about this issue.
4. One of the problems is that all five Conservative Members of Parliament have had regular meetings, over a long period of time, with British Rail and have adopted a high profile public posture in their constituencies as being

(2)

favourable campaigners for the electrification case. According to Patrick Mayhew, Reggie Eyre had said, in terms that electrification would proceed.

5. I think that the case has been put up by David Howell is a lousy one. However, David Howell came to see me yesterday and his depth of feeling on this subject (however unjustified) is intense. He thinks that it will be very damaging to him and to his Department if his recommendation is overruled by the Prime Minister.
6. Bryant Godman Irvine is a man of no consequence; but the other Members are; though I say this without enthusiasm, I recommend that the Secretary of State and the Tory Members should have their way.

Tesson

12.4.83

PP IAN GOW



10 DOWNING STREET

Mr Gow

Please would you let me know the outcome of your discussions with Messrs Stanley and Warren? I will then resubmit these papers to the Prime Minister.

MCS 11/4

WARREN - STANLEY -
FANON OF ELECTRIFICATION
MUCH LOCAL FEELING - ELECTRICITY LINE

M.C.H.M.C



Transcript

10 DOWNING STREET

Len Gave

Please see Teddie

Mount's note about Hastings-Tonbridge. I have already sent you a copy of David Howell's office's further letter on the subject.

May we have a word?

ML 30/3

1. MANY MANY THANKS
2. I HAVE CHANGED SIDES
3. D.A.R.H. IS WRONG. TO-
ARE RIGHT. 1-31/3/25