HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE

See themes & (EA).

DRAFT LETTER FROM LORD SHACKLETON, ON BEHALF OF THE POLITICAL HONOURS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

There has been placed before a recommendation that Mr Cyril Smith should be made a Knight, for his political services.

- 2. We draw your attention to the risk that such an award could give rise to adverse criticism.
- in 1970 Mr Smith was the subject of an investigation by the Lancashire Constabulary in connection with allegations of indecent assault against teenage boys. The allegations related to a period now more than twenty years ago, from 1961 to 1966, when Mr Smith was on the Rochdale Town Council and acted as Secretary to a committee administering a hostel for boys. Mr Smith denied the allegations. We understand that the Director of Public Prosecutions, to whom the Lancashire Constabulary sent their papers, advised against prosecution on the grounds that there was no reasonable prospect of conviction.

/4. But in

SECRET

HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE

4. But in 1971 there was comment in the Rochdale Alternative Press and Private Eye.
Copies are attached. One may regret this kind of press reporting, but it could be revived if an award to Mr Smith were made.
Moreover, in 1982, following a break-in at the offices of The Sun, police enquiries revealed that the editor of The Sun had a copy of the 1970 Police Report. Other newspapers may possess it. One can only speculate whether any editor of a national newspaper will be prepared to publish reports of the allegations.

SECRET

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- So We consider that Mr Smith would be slightly unfortunate if this episode were to stand in the way of an award, and we would not wish to make a positive adverse report if, after considering what I have said, you yourself were minded to proceed. But we have felt it right to warn you of our fear that the integrity of the honours system would be at some risk if the award were to be made and announced.
- G. If you decide to proceed, we will sign a Certificate. If you decide not to proceed we would have no objection if you wished that a communication should be made on your behalf to Mr Steel.

From: MRS M E HEDLEY-MILLER

// May 1988

SECRET AND HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE

MR N WICKS

You are aware that the Political Honours Scrutiny Committee has considered carefully the name of Mr Cyril Smith proposed for honour, for his political services, in the Birthday Honours List 1988. The Committee have asked me to write to you about him.

- 2. The Committee have seen articles in Private Eye and the Rochdale Alternative Press, copies of which I enclose, about alleged offences in the early 1960's, and a police enquiry in 1970.
- 3. But they dislike the risk of doing injustice on the basis of press reporting from such sources. They have noted Mr Smith was made an MBE in 1966, when an Alderman, for his political and public services in Rochdale: and that he subsequently became Mayor. He also became a Member of Parliament in 1972 after the police enquiries.
- 4. They have noted also that it was decided not to prosecute Mr Smith. Had there been a prosecution and an acquittal, it is reasonable to suppose that the Committee would not have wished to stand in the way of honour. The Committee feels that the benefit of the doubt should the more readily be given where there was no prosecution.
- 5. The Committee have accordingly signed the Certificate attached, and are content for the final decision to be taken by the Prime Minister herself.

Mary Hedley Mule

MRS M E HEDLEY-MILLER

(Secretary of the PHSC)

HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE

House of Lords
(1 May 1988

The Rt Honble

Margaret Thatcher MP

Dear Prime Minister

We have considered, in accordance with the terms of our reference, the particulars of Mr Cyril Smith, whom you propose to recommend to Her Majesty for an honour on account of political services in the Birthday Honours List, 1988.

2. You will be aware that we have had some hesitation about this award. But we now have the honour to report that, so far as we believe and have been able to ascertain, his past history or general character does not, in all the circumstances, render him unsuitable to be honoured.

Yours sincerely

This letter was discussed with Lord Thank leten, who is row out of the country, but had

ALT ERMOTIVE PRESS . 28 APRIL 1979 since evidence that, during the 1960's, Cyrl Side problem of a get hade agen 15 - 18 to 10f blum in where the be could from get them it were with he populoud their hare bottom:

course from the first was conducted by BAD measure, and in the figure of state occurs made in the state occurs and in the figure occurs of the state occurs made in the state of the state occurs occurs. There, and when follows were made in police during that investigation of these 99/1970.

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During the investigation the police took statements from 7 or 3 of the boys wish had lived at the heatel and from at least one who had not. RAP has traced 10 exercisents and one who, though never having been at Cambridge Houre, made a statement to the police.

(3) THE STATEMENTS

Of the 10, three have anthing but graite for Cyr2 Smith.
The other 7 have all made allegations which fall into one or both of two extegories:

it the results of our fast adjusten

OLICE INVESTIGATION

ote, statical out by Linearshire Course, or, statical some three years before Cyril one Rochstale's M.P. A lasted for acoust

listed by allegations made by a young that he was being decadement by police in charges of independent by police in charges of independent in Ristey. In estimation that chained there was, in effect, overest and mother for the poor. He alteged had done attends things but got away with R. as then Alderman, Chaliman of the Educ-and Scon to become prospective Parlia-te for the local Liberal Party which he had med.

are timmbers, while admitting with various amone has they had been interviewed by the of this in, as a fact, and upon to RAP, any myper solviers within the hostel. Some of severy had clear and, both to us and to some

The second set up by the Richdale Hortel for the control one of the medical structure to the found that he had now fives the provided medical structure to the found that he had now fives in Hugby that Smith was often present an appraisant of the found to the found that he have found for the caterification is one of the caterification. Some of the caterification is one of the caterification in the caterification is one of the caterification is one of the caterification in the caterification is one of the caterification in the caterification is of the found to the found the found that they have a for a caterification in the found that they have caterificated the found table and of the found table to the found table for the found that they have been caterificated to the found table found table for the found table for the found table for the found table for the found the found table for the found table for the found that they have been catefully in the found table for the found the found table for the found

v. 20 boys, though it seeinge lets. The mild reflectible was a doten leds who were Whip & Bowner, they had originally been (rm a Settibli with but were moved to that though down. Increasingly, retlifetts

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"After a few days in the hostel I was given a kind of muckels terminished by Cyril Smith. He taid me to take my treatest and pants down. He held my testides and told me to cough."

We have had timilar experiences described to us by than one other person.

recruited from the ranks of those in care or from were also recruit broken homes.

It elected as the end of 1955, primarily through lack of Ore becomington the quantum control in the control in (4) OUTSIDE THEHOSTEL



'fee gave me the choice between accepting his purchasent and leveling the based, i said I would secret his painthment...He took me line his Quer Scoon, He faid here to them y trensent and pasts down and being over his based. When had done took be his being the burst. When the down on the burst with his base hands on my bare bursts." They have described to us Smith's role is providing discipline. I we extracts from swear statements given to us illustrate the procedure: (3) From a man one married with 4 children and living in Scottable, deterfelse how, while at the bestel and aged about 18 he tooks a day off work from the job Sauth had arranged for him. His abstract from the job was responsed to the hostel and he was interriewed by Smith: (2) From a man, slagfe, fring and working in Rochdale, then agod about 15, describes how after he had been reported for a minor offence:

On three occasions, the self-faulty man remembers, Samith took the into the factor good daily agreet is bourse after they had reported this autobarders in him. On each occasion Smith enderwouved to prove the factors and bend thin our this hare, even to the dataset of a versaling match when most with resistance from pink. increasingly the ind's parcel. The strategy as travel.

The strates, it will be resemble about the first parcel and the strategy of the strate "Cyril Smith Sound out that I had taken some money.

He adde mee [if i would access this punishmen or be
dealt with by the authorities. I had it would seem to
punishment. He then the did not us that way it meets and
paut Gorn, and bend over this layer. He tropped on
hands between this legs, the bit one meny times with
his bare hand and I pleaded with him to stop because
it was funding me. This mak piece at the boats! After
wards the came to my bestoom and wiged my butteets,
with a vert spange.

(5) JACK McCANNM.P.

We have been told by Dr. Ian McKichan, then Rochdale's

During the course of the part meeting in 1975; each meanly. Smith supply hards to wheel Dr. McKilman B. Reigh. He coiled as the last of the same who had note to the course of the supply of the coiled as the last of the supply of the supply of the coiled as the supply of the purpose of sceling ways inducting the condition of the subscene.

Ch., the then Labour M.P. for the the same main for help in the. We have hed described the feeling and McCann who the feeling and McCann who Rochdale, He had e getting his M.S.E.

beta McCana's widow, Alfer, temembers her funband being antel of the fomil, we know that McCana was concerned about the idealise in which he found himself is lieve, though a mass of those confidence, he actually all distracted it with one autocitie in the counter of a train he journey between Landon and Manchener. That confident it lift which premumbers the conversation and icld RAF that of McCana had raid that he had taken the matter up with the preference of the contable.

Beyond that hint, we have not been able to find exactly what McCanad edit, evil sorphing he did had any bending on the event, Certahinh he Colle Constainbe concerned told RAP he has an persony of every meeting him. But there is one distuiting discrepancy in the stands sow being taken.

(6) THE D.P.P.

The police, at the conclusion of their inventigation, appear to have them the view that there was sufficient reason to warrant a count's receifer, A file was certainly drawn up by the Offser in charge of the Tast Face Team for submission to the Director of Fublic Propositions.

From that point the atory becomes disturbingly contact over the frame of whether the file actually reached the D.P.P. If has always been believed by those in the know that the file was indeed start to the D.P.P. And that the D.D.P. returned it marked for no further action on Dr. basis of instifficient evi-

That was what the investigating team were told. That is also what local associates of Smith and the then leading political figures to the year. who were officially informed of the proceedings - also believed. That was what Smith himself was told by the investigating officer.

As approach in the D.P. I becover tilde to confirm that the way the confirm that the way that the confirm to deny to the confirm that the confirm to deny to the confirm that the confirm that the confirm to deny to the confirm that the c

We also event to Sir Norman Stelburn, the man who was a the the Objects of Subblic Proceeditions at the time of the investigation. RAP's letter was forwarded to him by one of his Club's, the Adhanasem. On Verdenskay ZSin April we I received a plane cell flow sumence elitaing to be Sir of Norman, an haidsty and from a cash but photon, who said that the could remember poshing at all about tools a casa.

MAP also interferent Mr. Pallety, the Ohet Counbie of lancarbite at the line. He agreed that such as file "should have been sent" but shift "I can" say for sure whether the file was sent on not " He shift was paperad a "help the file High "was we done several filess. Their final comments was "Yee.

(7) SPECIAL BRANCH

The file, keys since as Person, the HQ of Lancashire Countbulley, came to the center of casional, severa in Echnary-Marth 1974. Then there were distrussion of a possible coalidon between the Conservatives and the

if that happened, Liberals. The possibility, if that happen Liberals initialing Mantachial pours, prompt Branch to acquire a copy of the Pussion file was taken, with special security precautions!

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CYRIL SMITH

Throughout the policy enquity South asserted his homeone of the degrations. It tood this firstens as the time that it was a case of an arcenty to darrage him policycily. It political to the bear described to water of the carefully. It political to the home backgrowth and feered to water of recredibility. In his interview with the policies of their last of present, he denied all the allegities made against him. We have no reason to believe that the legistries made against him. We have no reason to believe that his would do acything of the than the foldy. RAV were to kine asting for an increive to disturs the serious bases to kine asting for an increive to disturs the serious bases to show attent by nor investigation, but he did not reply.

WHY NOW? 6

This is not, though it will be suggested it is, a amera campagn in the middle of an efficien. Our investigation started, as our recedes show and there we talked in can confirm, last Genbeis when the effection was ttill thought to be a syet a sea,. When we polithed out hast state - which ambunets the date of this one - we did not have that this dister would be just a few days before an efection.

The fact is that car finding a shaded remains as united it theirs are for a rem as a shaded remain as united it theirs area to be for a rem as a shaded remain as united it theirs area to be shaded in their area of the shaded in their area of their area o

If had already been experted to ut. before publication, that Smith intended to issue, a lade wit. That did not after our conviction that the men we tast intended were telling the truth. Bor our vice that intey about zo to the been but with the indeblible mat of their experiences at the hands of Smith. For soo long, it is they who have effectively been branded as wrongsdoest.

(10) CONCLUSION

F's fonction to pronounce on guil or 60 bowers believe that the investigation we resulted in a court ease. We extend but y of the new we interviewed, that had the ed a less preminent person, it would have If the not RAF's forestion is innecessee. We do however built of 1970 about Bave resulted in a buffers, fike many of the men we buffers, fike mystred a less premis had wascup that regult.

We do find South golly of the charge of hypoenies, over haved in the Prope affer, what very less the might have been expected to remain allow. He did not. We have established that Smith himself was a major nourse of the Persa's information on the Liberal Party a fifth as the time. He was reporting, at his own initiative, the most confidential of conversations with his leader, direct to the Daily Mirror.

We acrept that Stalth may acither have committed or, even if the evidence gathered by the police lavestigation had left to procureling, been found gally of any criminal offence.
But the processes described in the statements mode to both
the policiestal RAR must be condemned, rod for any sexual
content with may be call from them, but because they
represent a restour abuse of anthony.

remain, personal personal Private preferences are, and should remain, personal business. The use of public position for personal gratification at the cost of exploitation of others must be prevented There is also rante for concern in the questions of whether the film in this case reached the D.P.P.'s selfer. RAF believes that this absolute be the subject of a full and impartial investigation.

"You can't harm me. My best friend is the Director of Public Prosecutions.

(traditional)

There is not an important newspaper or TV station in the land which has not received a copy of the May issue of the Rochdole Alternative Paper (RAP), one of the few community newspapers to have flourished in recent years. The centre page article, entitled "Strange Case", describes some unusual behaviour on the part of Cyril Smith, Rochdale's newly-returned Liberal MP. The allegations are substantiated by a number of sworn statements and carefully recorded interviews, but they have so far not been published anywhere else. Nor has any writ for libel yet been issued by C. Smith.

The article refers to the Cambridge House Boys Hostel, which was opened by the Rochdale Hostel for Boys Association, of which Cyril Smith was secretary. Smith was then a prominent member of the Labour Party (he got the MBE on the recommendation of the town's Labour MP in 1966). It publishes extracts from three men, all living in Rochdale and all then homeless apprentices who were staying in the hostel. The first man says that he had missed a day off work, which was against the hostel rules. He was reported, and interviewed by Cyril Smith. His statement goes on:

"He gave me the choice between accepting his punishment or leaving the hostel. I said I would accept his punishment... He took me into the Quiet Room. He told me to take my trousers and pants down and he hit me four or five times with his bare hands on my bare buttocks."

The second man's statement says:
"Cyril Smith found that I had taken some here is not an important newspaper or TV station in the land which has not received a copy

buttocks."

The second man's statement says:
"Cyril Smith found that I had taken some money. He asked me if I would accept his punishment or be dealt with by the authorities. I said I would accept his punishment. He then told me to take off my trousers and pants and bend over his knee. He trapped my hands between his legs. He hit me many times with his bare hand, and I pleaded with him to stop because he was hurting me. This took place at bare hand, and I pleaded with him to stop because he was hurring me. This took place at the hostel. Afterwards, he came to my bedroom and wiped my bare buttocks with a sponge."

Another man says:

"After a few days I was given a kind of medical examination by Cyril Smith. He told me to take my trousers and pants down. He held my testicles and told me to cough."

The RAP editors say they have four other sworn statements from men who allege similar spankings or inspections.

sworn statements from men who allege similar spankings or inspections.

The hostel closed in 1965, after the council decided not to increase their grant. But in 1970, a young man was interviewed at Risley Remand Centie, lie told police about punishment he had received from Smith at the Rochdale hostel several years previously. A full-length police inquiry followed. Smith was interviewed and vigorously denied all the allegations put to him.

The police inquiry was completed, and a file prepared. What happened then is not clear. A DPP statement to RAP put it like this:

"The DPP cannot trace such a case being

referred to us, but cannot confirm or deny

This ambiguous statement was not helped Norman Skelhorn, then the DPP, who said he could not remember such a case. The police declined to comment.

Whether or not the file went to the DPP, it

was kept for some years at the police headquarters at Presson.

quarters at Presson.

In March 1974, during discussions about the possible formation of a Con/Lib coalition after the general election of that month, the Special Branch copied the file and took it, with special security precautions, to London.

At the time of the police inquiry, Cyril Smith had just joined the Liberal Party and was expected to become Liberal candidate in a town with substantial Liberal traditions.

SECRET AND HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE

DRAFT MINUTE FROM MRS HEDLEY-MILLER

TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S PRINCIPAL PRIVATE SECRETARY You are aware that the Political Honours Scrutiny Committee has considered carefully the name of proposed for honour, for his political services, in the Birthday Honours List 1988. The Committee have asked me to write to you about him.

- 2. The Committee have seen articles in Private Eye and the Rochdale Alternative Press, copies of which I enclose, about alleged offences in the early 1960's, and a police enquiry in 1970.
- 3. But they dislike the risk of doing injustice on the basis of press reporting from such sources. They have noted Mr was made an MBE in 1966, when an Alderman, for his political and public services in Rochdale: and that he subsequently became Mayor. He also became a Member of Parliament in 1972 after the police enquiries.
- 4. They have noted also that it was decided not to prosecute Mr . Had there been a prosecution and an acquittal, it is reasonable to suppose that the Committee would not have wished to stand in the way of honour. The Committee feels that the benefit of the doubt should the more readily be given where there was no prosecution.
- 5. The Committee have accordingly signed the Certificate attached the formula of the proposed honour, and are content for the Prime Minister herself to judge whether the political and public services rendered by Mr merits the award of a knighthood.

Maped ofenen early 1960's.

Mayor 66-67.

TL 13.15

Mbic 966

You will be antere that we have had centure heritations about the animal of the forest. But we now have the honour to reportion, to fet as we believe and have been able to ascertain the past history of operat character does not in all the attendednies, render him all the attendednies,

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From: MRS M E HEDLEY-MILLER

28 April 1988

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HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE

SIR ROBIN BUTLER

11/5/18

We spoke about Mr Cyril Smith, proposed for Knight Bachelor for his political services.

- 2. I attach copies of the relevant pieces from the Rochdale Alternative Press and Private Eye.
- 3. The PHSC might have taken the view that the fact that the Press might stir up adverse comment on the announcement of a K for Mr Smith was enough to justify what I might call a "Warning of risk" letter from them to the Prime Minister.
- 4. I have now consulted the Committee. They feel that

 if there is fire under this smoke, they would probably

 not wish to sign a certificate giving their go-ahead

 for a K.
 - if it is all rather baseless, then "let the press do its worst", but the Prime Minister need not be prevented from giving an honour where this is due.
- 5. They would accordingly wish:
 - (i) to see the Lancashire police report to the DPP
 - (ii) to know what lay behind the DPP advice that there was
 - no reasonable prospect of conviction. Bid they mean that

SECRET

HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE

Mr Smith was probably innocent? Or merely that he probably was not innocent but that the evidence was nevertheless not such as to stand up in court?

So they would like further information, which I would have to invite you, please, to help me to obtain.

I am very ignorant about the ways of the Director of Public Prosecution, but I hope that a letter on the lines of the attached draft would be appropriate.

My

MRS M E HEDLEY-MILLER

S. Roben Butte whole to DA

9 May 1988 with DAP

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Ho copy have. He hold a wieling on I was present. a record is in IR Buta.;

Nymer rand that his papers were surring, thing enough record had bee kept. allegation, 6 of whom were from the home. They node rimiter allegation: there could concernably law lee collection. As Smith made a blanked demand in a written Materiers, and would set answer greation on spenfu comes. there die work all the male, it as DM found the endance "love", and extended. There is not specify the party was monthly

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SECRET AND HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE

DRAFT LETTER FROM SIR ROBIN BUTLER

TO the DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

It has, been proposed to the Prime Minister that Mr Cyril Smith MP should be recommended for the award of a knighthood for his political services.

- that your predecessor, in 1970, received papers from the Lancashire Constabulary in connection with allegations of indecent assault, between the years 1961-66, when Mr Smith was on the Rochdale County Council and acted as Secretary to a Committee administering a hostel for boys. The then Director, I understand, advised against a prosecution on the grounds that there was no reasonable prospect of conviction.
 - (Petic)
- 3. The Political Honours Scrutiny Committee (a Committee of the Privy Council, whose present members are Lord Shackleton, Lord Grimond and Lord Pym) will need to take a view on this honours recommendation, and they say that they would be greatly helped, in preparing their advice to the Prime Minister, if they knew whether the case against Mr Smith was not well founded: or whether it was a sound case, but that the evidence was not likely to stand up in court.

SECRET AND HONOURS IN CONFIDENCE

4. I wonder therefore whether you would be willing to tell me a little more about your predecessor's views? If you prefer not to write, Mrs Mary Hedley-Miller, the Ceremonial Officer and Secretary of the PHSC, who works for me, could perhaps come and see you for a brief discussion. The case for taking the exceptional step of writing to you in this way is to protect the Prime Minister (and The Queen), while also being fair to Mr Smith.

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Tob gone .

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