



THIS IS A SPLENDID  
LETTER FROM ALAN CLARK,  
WHO IS A FIRST CLASS MAN.

14.  
5/8/1960.

Ian,

I enclose a copy  
of my letter to the  
chief whip.

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From: The Hon. Alan Clark, M.P.

5th August, 1980.

*Ian Michael*

I am writing to draw your attention to the highly objectionable press coverage in today's papers - particularly the Guardian and the Mail - concerning the Cabinet decision on teachers' pay.

In the ordinary way I would of course raise this at the next meeting of the '22, but this is no longer possible. I think it is very bad show for two members of the Cabinet - quoted but not identified - to be briefing journalists on an alleged 'defeat' for the Prime Minister. The political editor of the Guardian ran the story as his lead item giving it two columns on the front page and continuing with one on the back and it is clear from the text that he could not have sustained this without a very comprehensive briefing from one or more of the members of the Cabinet Committee concerned. This would be bad enough in any circumstances, but Ian Aitken spends his whole time emphasising alleged divisions within the Parliamentary Party, forecasting a 'U' turn etc. The gloating way in which he presented today's story was most offensive.

If certain members of the Cabinet exult in being called 'Heavyweight wets' that is down to them, but the whole thing gives a most unfortunate impression in the country at large. And I do not need to tell you that as far as the good will of our constituents and local party workers is concerned, it is the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister alone, who is responsible for the Party's present standing in the opinion polls.

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*Alan*

Rt. Hon. M. Jopling M.P.,  
Chief Whip,  
House of Commons,  
S.W.1.