

1959 Oct 9 Fr
Margaret Thatcher

Remarks winning Finchley

Document type: public statement

Document kind: Remarks

Venue: Christ's College, Church End, Finchley

Source: *Finchley Press*, 16 October 1959

Journalist: -

Editorial comments: -

Importance ranking: Minor

Word count: 649

Themes: General Elections, Conservative Party (organisation), Labour Party and Socialism

TORY "TEAMWORK" WINS AN ELECTION

LABOUR TAKES LOSS WITH A SMILE

It was getting on for 12.30 am. on Friday morning that party supporters—not a great number—witnessed the closing stages of the General Election so far as it affected Finchley.

In the lofty, balconied Big Hall at Christ's College, Church End, redolent with cigar smoke and lit up like a circus tent with naked bulbs strong across the ceiling so that the vote counters would make no mistakes, the candidates, agents and spectators watched the bundles of ballot papers grow on tables marked with candidates' names.

As the counting went on, elsewhere in classrooms the parties had segregated to huddle over portable radios, munch sandwiches and drink tea, as they listened to the quickening flow of results from the rest of the country.

Back in Big Hall there were signs of activity on the platform as the Acting Returning Officer (Town Clerk Mr. R. M. Franklin) called agents and candidates to inspect 'doubtful' ballot papers—those on which voters had scrawled critical, encouraging or otherwise irrelevant remarks—or signed their names! The agents made a last quick count of the bundled ballot papers on their tables. Then the result, read by the Returning Officer, the Mayor (Cr. Major K. M. Cave):

Deakins (Labour) 13,437, Spence (Liberal) 12,701. When he came to 'Thatcher' the Mayor got as far as "Twenty-nine thousand ..." and the rest of the figures were drowned by Conservative cheers. The Mayor started again. Thatcher (Conservative) 29,697. Conservative majority, 16,260.

The Town-Clerk announced that the polling percentage had been 80.97.

The duly elected Member for the Finchley Constituency, Mrs. Margaret Hilda Thatcher, M.A, B.Sc, who had shed her tight topcoat to reveal a dark blue dress, stepped forward to make her first speech of a new era. In a voice still strong and clear despite scores of speeches in the busy weeks before the election she said:

"I am thrilled as the tremendous result".

TEAMWORK

Mrs. Thatcher said that the Conservative's decisive win had been due entirely to teamwork and a spirit of loyalty, such as she had never before encountered. With a wave of her hand she indicated a grey-suited figure leaning against the wall in the body of the hall—"And there is the architect of our victory. Mr. Blatch, our Chairman."

When Conservative applause had died she continued that her party's principal opponents, Labour, had fought an enjoyable election behind a fine candidate, Eric Deakins. "I certainly look forward to meeting Mr. Deakins in some future Parliament", said Mrs. Thatcher, and here Conservative and Labour cheers mingled.

"I now have the honour to be elected Member of Parliament for Finchley and Friern Barnet. I shall do my best to serve my country and my constituency", concluded Mrs. Thatcher.

THE LESSON

The defeated Labour candidate was still cheerful. Mr. Deakins said that in his first Parliamentary contest he had learned a lot in this district. Not only of election work but—"How to conduct myself". He had found nothing but courtesy and a friendly hearing from the people of Finchley and Friern Barnet. He congratulated Mrs. Thatcher, and said his party supporters had worked hard and given him great support.

For his contribution to the speeches the Liberal, Mr. Spence, chose to "size up the situation", Liberals, he said, had increased their vote by 60 per cent or more. The Conservatives had won with a substantial majority, but less votes than predicted. The Socialist too had polled less votes than in 1955, and these had gone to Liberal.

At this point heckling began and laughter greeted the speaker's arguments. He concluded with the promise that "Finchley would see".