



Government Chief Whip
12 Downing Street, London SW1

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

SIR JOHN EDEN

John Eden has written a letter to John Stradling Thomas in which he says that his family ramifications and commitments are increasing, and that he wants to give more time and energy to them. Also, he feels that his constituency work is beginning to pall. He is of a mind to suggest to his constituents at Bournemouth West (majority 16,626) that they look for a new candidate who can progressively take over from him. This would be with a view to his giving up during the course of this Parliament at a time which would cause the minimum inconvenience to the Government. I have had a short talk to him and I am intending to see him again. It is my intention to tell him that we cannot possibly agree to a by-election there in the foreseeable future, and that we must ask him to hang on for the time being. I cannot see that it would do much harm if he were to announce fairly soon that he does not intend to stand again at the next election. This would probably relieve him of a good deal of constituency work. However, I shall make it clear to him that we would not wish to fight a by-election at the moment.

7 December 1979

Eden
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PRIME MINISTER

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not dissent.
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