

# The by elections

The frustration of some Conservative MPs with current policy and management of the party led to three of them resigning with immediate effect, a most unusual development. MPs usually accept they have made a commitment to their electors to serve for a Parliament.

Some will dismiss these actions as arising from the special circumstances over the Parliamentary enquiry into the past conduct of Boris and from the bitter disappointment of his closest allies over the way a wave of Ministerial resignations was used to force him out of office. The PM's closest supporters are putting round that an attempt to copy the rolling resignation method of applying pressure has failed as they do not anticipate any more doing it. They see this as a win.

What matters more is how the PM now responds. He needs to do all he can to win the by elections. Losing any one of them would be worrying. Losing all would be disastrous. He needs to understand as the polls tell us that it is not just 3 Conservative MPs who have lost the wish to support for their own personal reasons, but millions of Conservative voters who voted Conservative in 2019 but who tell pollsters they do not want to if asked again right now. Just sending lots of volunteers and MPs to deliver leaflets will not be enough. Voters will want some persuasion that policy will reflect their needs and preferences going forwards.

The Boris statement which of course stemmed immediately from his dispute with the Committee on conduct ranged widely. It argued that the promises made in 2019 on Brexit wins, taxes, growth, animal welfare and others need to be honoured instead of dropping the relevant legislation and hiking taxes. It would be helpful to the country as well as to the PM and to the Conservatives in the by election if the lower taxes, Brexit wins and growth strategy were introduced now. The right kind of lower taxes and growth policies are not only popular but will also cut the deficit.