

THE NATIONAL UNION OF CONSERVATIVE AND UNIONIST ASSOCIATIONS

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday 15th November 1979

The Committee met at 32 Smith Square, Westminster on Thursday 15th November 1979 at 2.15 p.m. under the chairmanship of Sir Charles Johnston, TD. The names of the 114 members present are recorded.

1. Chairman's opening remarks

Miss Shelagh Roberts was congratulated on her successful election to the European Parliament and Mr Tony Bayman on becoming Chairman of the National Society of Conservative Agents.

The Chairman recorded a welcome to Mr Ray Whitney, OBE, MP as a new representative of the International Office Overseas Committee and Miss Anthea McIntyre as a new Vice-Chairman of the YCNAC.

He referred to the death of Mr H. V. Armstrong, OBE, DCM at the wonderful age of 92. Mr Armstrong started work for the Party in 1913, had been a Central Office Agent in Northern and Greater London Areas and Secretary of the National Union from 1938 to 1952. Members stood in silent tribute.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies from 21 members were noted and recorded.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th July, having been circulated with the agenda, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. Business arising from the Minutes

There was none.

5. Resignation of Sir Frank Marshall as a Vice-Chairman of the National Union

The Committee received the resignation of Sir Frank Marshall as a Vice-Chairman of the National Union on his appointment as a Vice-Chairman of the Party Organisation responsible for local government and, consequently, his resignation as a representative of the National Union on the Party's Advisory Committee on Policy. Grateful thanks to Sir Frank were recorded.

The Chairman said that nominations for officers would be invited in the normal way at the beginning of January 1980 and suggested that Mrs Ann Springman, OBE, who came fifth by a substantial margin in the elections last June, should be elected to the Party's Advisory Committee on Policy to replace Sir Frank. This proposition was moved by Sir Herbert Redfearn, JP, DL, seconded by Sir John Taylor, OBE, TD, JP, DL and carried unanimously.

6. Report from the General Purposes Committee

The Chairman reported on matters considered at the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 14th November.

/.... The City

The City Hall at Cardiff had been booked for the 1981 Central Council Meeting on 27/28th March.

National Advisory Committee reports included reference to the successful Women's Conference on caring for children and a considerable discussion on the need for much closer co-operation between local government groups, councillors and constituency associations, particularly after some bad results in local government by-elections. An improvement in relationship between local authorities and local Members of Parliament and the quality of local government candidates was advocated.

In the CBF report Mr McAlpine had urged the payment of constituency quotas in full and as much help as possible to meet a very difficult financial year.

The National Agricultural and Countryside Forum had made a very successful start.

Unfortunately, the Prime Minister was not expected to attend the 1980 Central Council Meeting in the Bournemouth Pavilion Theatre on 21st/22nd March. There would be Civic and Area receptions on Friday evening. Preliminary notices would be issued on 18th January, motions had to be submitted by 7th February, the Officers would prepare the agenda on 12th February and handbooks and tickets would be sent on 6th March only to those who had applied. Nomination forms for the election of National Union Officers would be despatched on 8th January for return by 24th January, followed by a postal ballot between 4th and 18th February. The General Purposes Committee had endorsed a recommendation from the Officers that Sir Theo Constantine, CBE, DL should be asked to stand for the office of President, and this was approved by the Executive Committee. Suggestions for the programme of the Central Council on Saturday afternoon were considered and the Committee favoured the idea that the Ministers in the Department of the Environment might form a team to answer questions at an open forum.

Various recommendations from the Standing Review Committee had been accepted regarding representation from European Constituency Councils, the Association of Conservative Clubs and recognised Conservative bodies. A paper on the proposed changes of National Union Rules would be prepared for consideration by the next meeting of the Executive Committee in January. It had been recommended that National Advisory Committees might consider introducing a seven or ten year rule regarding their membership where they did not already have one.

The Committee was given information regarding changes in the appointments of Central Office Agents and a training scheme "Action for the Eighties", and members were asked to use their influence to encourage new agents to join their superannuation fund.

7. Review of the 1979 Party Conference at Blackpool

The Chairman reported that general acclaim of the Conference as one of the best for many years was borne out by the fact that only one trivial complaint had been received this year from TV viewers and one about the lack of ventilation in the Winter Gardens. On behalf of the Committee he congratulated the Chairman of the National Union, Mr David Davenport-Handley, OBE, JP, DL on his outstanding chairmanship of a most successful Conference, and also the Rt. Hon. Francis Pym, MC, MP on the way in which he had presided over the final session. He referred to the statistics which had been circulated with the agenda and are lodged with these minutes. The Conference had the largest attendance ever and received excellent publicity. The Chairman expressed grateful thanks to Mr Alan Smith and his staff, Mr Alan Leonard and his team and Mr Bob Wolstenholme and the Stewards.

Mr Davenport-Handley asked that the real thanks of the Committee be recorded to Sir Charles Johnston for his sterling work.

/... Mr Michael

Mr Michael Taylor agreed that the timing and publicity were excellent. The Chairman said that the Prime Minister had agreed to the same timing next year at Brighton, and whilst there was some discussion about this, general approval was given. Mr Colin Turner, DFC suggested a more attractive topic on the Friday morning and the Chairman said that the Secretary would be glad to receive any other constructive suggestions.

8. Consideration of resolutions received from Area, Constituency and other organisations

The Committee approved the action taken on 14 resolutions received since the last meeting. In response to a request from Mr Oulton Wade, JP, the Chairman read Mr Whitelaw's reply to resolution No. 8 concerning appointments to outside bodies. Other members stressed the need to restore the balance in these appointments and the Party Chairman, Rt. Hon. Lord Thorneycroft, replied that the matter was in hand. Mr Ben Newman asked about resolution No. 11 and the Chairman gave his reply, which was approved.

9. Discussion on Foreign Affairs

The Rt. Hon. Lord Carrington, KCMG, MC, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, received a very warm welcome from the Committee and spoke of the background to the conference on Rhodesia and the general situation in Africa. Lord Carrington also dealt with other problems concerning the EEC, Iran and the Middle East and then answered ten questions.

In thanking Lord Carrington, the Chairman paid tribute to his great achievement in securing agreement so far at the conference on Rhodesia.

10. Report and recommendations from the European Working Party

The Chairman presented a report and recommendations from the European Working Party which had been circulated with the notice and is lodged with these minutes. Several points were raised and answered in the discussion which ensued, and the recommendations were then approved by the Committee with a minor amendment to make it clear in paragraph 4 that one of the existing National Union Vice-Chairmen and Area Vice-Chairmen would be given special responsibility for European matters.

11. Agents' salary scales for 1980

Mr Alistair McAlpine, Chairman of the Agents' Employment Advisory Committee, presented the proposed agents' salary scales for 1980 and proposals for the appointment and remuneration of Euro-agents, copies of which had been circulated and are appended to these minutes. He said that the former gave a 16% increase in salaries, revision of car allowances and increased leave. The scales were approved. In regard to the proposals for Euro-agents, on which Mr McAlpine reported, Mr Desmond Fennell, QC was concerned about the effect on UK associations and Councillor W. Brum on financing this operation and its effect on constituency quotas. Mr Tony Bayman said that this would call for a re-assessment of the work of agents and for high grade MEPs' secretaries. With an alteration to para. 5B to refer to "Euro-Agents/Secretaries", the proposals were approved.

The Chairman urged members to give encouragement to any potential agent trainees to come forward to improve the intake situation.

12. Alterations to the Rules of the YCNAC

Mr Bob Hughes moved the approval of proposed alterations to the YCNAC rules as circulated and lodged with these minutes. These were approved with three minor alterations.

13. Alterations to the Rules of the Greater London Area

Mr Basil Feldman moved approval of the alterations circulated with the notice and appended to these minutes. After Mrs Pam Hunter had questioned the alteration of Rule VI(c) regarding audited accounts and Mr Simon Ashton had replied that as there were no funds there could be no accounts, it was agreed that this matter should be referred to the Party Treasurer for consideration. Subject to this proviso the alterations were approved; but the Greater London Area were asked to consider their disputes rule in relation to Model and National Union rules.

14. Business for the next meeting

After Mr Michael Heseltine and Mr John Stanley had been suggested as possible speakers at the next meeting on 17th January, it was decided to leave the matter to the Officers.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 4.05 p.m.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF CONSERVATIVE AND UNIONIST ASSOCIATIONS

Executive Committee Meeting - 17th January 1980

(Resolutions received from
Constituency, Area and other organisations)

1. Capital Punishment

"The Committee wish to draw attention to the concern still being expressed by the majority of the public to Parliament's failure to re-introduce capital punishment for murder."

Passed by 13 votes to 7 by the Yorkshire Area Finance and General Purposes Committee on 17th November when 20 members were present.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. William Whitelaw, C.H., M.C., M.P.

2. Cuts in Local Government Spending

"That this Council believes that the Government's cuts in Local Government spending are not only necessary but desirable and calls on all Conservative Councillors serving in Labour controlled Local Authorities to carefully monitor their Council's proposals and to expose the many instances where unnecessary cuts are being made in emotive areas without any corresponding cuts in administration."

Passed by an overwhelming majority by the half-yearly meeting of the Northern Area Council on Thursday 22nd November when approximately 165 members were present.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine, M.P.

3. Reductions in Public Expenditure

"That this Council is concerned that the Labour Party and some Trade Unions are conducting a co-ordinated campaign to misrepresent the purpose and effects of the Government's reductions in public expenditure, particularly in Local Government, and that this campaign is very evident in the North East. It calls upon Conservatives in every constituency and Local Authority to mount an equally strong campaign to actively support the Government's determined and necessary stand."

Passed by an overwhelming majority by the half-yearly meeting of the Northern Area Council on Thursday 22nd November when approximately 165 members were present.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine, M.P.

4. Fourth T.V. Channel

"That this Council welcomes the Government's decision to give the fourth T.V. channel to the Independent Broadcasting Authority and hopes that the forthcoming Act will:

- (a) ensure that the fourth channel is used to extend the choice of programmes which appeal to ordinary people;
- (b) ensure that competition is introduced into the sale of T.V. advertising by the appointment of an independent sales agency to the current television contractors;
- (c) allow some regional programming and advertising;
- (d) allow independent programme makers a substantial proportion of the programmes transmitted, and thereby prevent the domination of the channel by the current television contractors;
- (e) continue the same political editorial control, concerning balance, as currently exercised by the I.B.A. over I.T.V."

Passed nem con by the half-yearly meeting of the Northern Area Council on Thursday 22nd November when approximately 165 members were present.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. William Whitelaw, C.H., M.C., M.P.

5. Draft Immigration Rules

"That this Executive Council welcomes the determination of Her Majesty's Government to implement the commitment in the Conservative Manifesto to introduce new controls on future immigration. This Council is however gravely concerned at the position under the draft Immigration Rules of daughters born to United Kingdom citizens working abroad who wish to marry foreigners and settle in the United Kingdom, particularly in view of the unfairness to Service and other families working abroad. This Executive Council requests that the Rules be amended to allow entry to the husbands and fiancés of such daughters by amending paragraphs 50, 52, and 117 to read as follows:

'Provided that the wife (or woman) is a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies either born in the United Kingdom or if born abroad the child of a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies born in the United Kingdom.'

Passed unanimously by the Battersea South Executive Council on Thursday 29th November when 29 members were present.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. William Whitelaw, C.H., M.C., M.P.

6. Union Reform

"The South Ayrshire Executive Council notes with approval the Government's proposals for union reform, but urges that the following two additional measures be implemented:

- (a) A "closed shop" is unconstitutional and intolerable in a free society and should be outlawed.
- (b) A union should be required to make a statutory contribution towards the upkeep of members on official strike. Unofficial strikers should forfeit a proportion of benefit payable."

Passed unanimously by the South Ayrshire Executive Council on 10th December when 21 members were present.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. James Prior, M.P.

7. Incentive to Work

"After six months of Conservative Government it is to be regretted that there is less incentive to work, for the lower paid, than there was under the last Government. Tax changes in the Budget and the anticipated essential alteration in the Index Linking of benefits are a step in the right direction but do not go nearly far enough.

If in the future the working man is clearly better off than those not working, then, and only then, will people value their jobs, and there will be a more moderate approach to wage claims and an improvement in industrial relations."

Passed unanimously by the South Ayrshire Executive Council on 10th December when 21 members were present.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. James Prior, M.P.

8. Rating System

"That this Association views with increasing alarm and despondency the massive increase in rates which currently threaten all rate-payers and we commend the stated Conservative policy of reforming the rating system, as soon as is practicable, by abolishing the existing domestic rating system and replacing it by a system of taxes more broadly based and related to people's ability to pay. Special consideration to be given to the local shopkeeper and small trader so far as their rates are concerned.

We further reiterate that there is no intention by the Conservative Party in the reform of rating to interfere with Local Government control over its local services, including education."

Passed by the North West Area Council on 10th November.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine, M.P.

9. Voting System for Future European Elections

"This Association expresses the hope that Her Majesty's Government will make every effort to retain the traditional British voting system for all future elections of United Kingdom members of the European Parliament."

Carried unanimously by the South Gloucestershire Executive Council.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. William Whitelaw, C.H., M.C., M.P.

10. Explanation of Government Policy

"The Yeovil Constituency Conservative Association is concerned over the apparent lack of communication and understanding between the Party and the electorate. It asks Her Majesty's Government to use greater and more effective use of every means at its disposal to explain, simply, its principles and policy and the reasons for them, to bring a greater awareness of many of the problems the country is facing."

Carried unanimously by the Yeovil Executive Committee when 20 members were present.

Forwarded to: Rt. Hon. Angus Maude, T.D., M.P.

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE RULES OF THE NATIONAL UNION

1. PROVINCIAL AREA COUNCILS

Rule V - Constituency Representation

INSERT after (4)(d) a new paragraph

"(5) The Chairman and the Finance Officer (or their deputies) of each European Constituency Council within the Provincial Area, if not otherwise qualified."

Re-number subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL

2. Rule IX - Constituency Representation

INSERT after (4)(e) a new paragraph

"(5) The Chairman and the Finance Officer (or their deputies) of each European Constituency Council, if not otherwise qualified."

Re-number subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

3. Rule IX - Other Organisations' Representation

(6)(e) - Recognised bodies

DELETE "two" (representatives) and INSERT "four".

4. (6)(f) - Graduates' Association

DELETE "forty" (representatives) and INSERT "six".

5. Rule IX - Constitution

INSERT after (8) a new paragraph -

Local Government Associations' Conservative Groups.

"The Leader of each Conservative Group in the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, the Association of County Councils and the Association of District Councils."

Re-number subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

6. Rule XII - Leaders

(1)(a) DELETE "and" in line 1 and INSERT after "Lords" in line 2 "and the Leader of the Group of British Conservative Members in the European Parliament."

7. Rule XII

INSERT after (1)(h) a new sub-paragraph

"(i) The Chairman of the Standing Review Committee"

8. Rule XII - National Advisory Committees

(2) DELETE "one Vice-Chairman" in line 1 and INSERT "two Vice-Chairmen."

9. Rule XII

Conservative Group in the European Parliament

INSERT after (4)(b) a new sub-paragraph -

"(c) One representative of the Group of British Conservative Members in the European Parliament (an alternate may be appointed)".

Re-letter subsequent sub-paragraphs accordingly.

10. Rule XII - Advisory Committees' Additional Representatives

(4)(c) DELETE all existing words and INSERT
"Two additional representatives of each of the National Advisory Committees on Women, Young Conservatives and Local Government, one additional representative of the Trades Unionists' National Advisory Committee and three additional representatives of the Federation of Conservative Students."

11. Rule XII - Co-opted Members

(8) DELETE all existing words after "exceeding" in line 1 and INSERT
"seven to be co-opted as the Executive Committee may determine, subject to its Standing Orders."

SOUTH EASTERN PROVINCIAL AREA COUNCIL - RULE CHANGES

The changes to the rules of the Area were proposed to the Area Council's Annual Meeting on 9 April 1979. The changes were unanimously approved by the Area Council to allow five Vice Presidents instead of four, and to admit Members of the European Parliament representing Euro Constituencies in the S.E. Area, prospective Euro Candidates and Chairmen of ECCs to membership of the Area Council.

RULE 4 AREA COUNCIL

- (6) not more than four Vice Presidents shall hold office at the same time (delete four, insert five)
- add (13) The Members of the European Parliament representing Euro Constituencies within the Area who are in receipt of the Party Whip
- (14) The prospective Conservative Candidates, approved by the Standing Advisory Committee on Candidates and officially selected by Euro Constituency Councils within the Area
- (15) The Chairmen of the Euro Constituency Councils within the Area