

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

12th MEETING

5.00 P.M., Wednesday 7th July 1976 in the Leader's
Room at the House of Commons.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the 118th Meeting.
2. Future Business. ✓
3. Forthcoming Events. ✓
4. Forthcoming Report of the Houghton Committee. ✓
5. Any Other Business.

- Policy documents. $\frac{1}{2}$ m.
and before Shadow
Cabinet.

7 July

MRS. THATCHER

Mr. Pym will be bringing
up New York Dressed Poultry
at Shadow this evening.

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 122nd Meeting held at 5.00 p.m. on Wednesday 7th July 1976, in the Leader's Room at The House of Commons.

Present: Mrs. Thatcher (In the Chair)

Mr. Whitelaw, Sir Keith Joseph, Lord Carrington, Lord Hailsham, Mr. Maudling, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Mr. Pym, Mr. Gilmour, Mr. Jenkin, Mr. Peyton, Mr. St. John Stevas, Mr. Heseltine, Mr. Raison, Mr. Maude, Mr. Buchanan-Smith, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Neave, Mrs. Oppenheim, Mr. Biffen, Lord Thorneycroft.

Mr. Atkins

In Attendance: Mr. Butler, Mr. Douglas, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Nicholson

Apologies: Mr. Prior

1. Proposed Business for the Week 12th July - 19th July

On Monday 12th July there would be Private Members' Motions: Those of Mr. John Hunt on The Problems of Greater London and those of Mr. Lamont and Mr. Dudley Smith. This would be followed at 7 p.m. by the Third Reading of the Development Land Tax Bill (Mr. Page) and by the Remaining Stages of the Iron and Steel (Amendment) Bill (Mr. Nelson and Mr. Marshall) and Proceedings on certain Consolidation Measures (Mr. Awdry).

On Tuesday, 13th July Mr. Stan Thorne would seek leave to introduce his Employment Protection Act (Amendment) Bill under the 10 Minute Rule. This would be followed by the first day of the Report stage of the Finance Bill (Sir Geoffrey Howe and team).

On Wednesday, 14th July Mr. Gwilym Roberts would seek leave to introduce his National Insurance (Retirement Pensions) (Amendment) Bill under the 10 Minute Rule. This would be followed by the second day of the Report stage of the Finance Bill (Sir Geoffrey Howe and team).

On Thursday 15th July there would be the third day of the Report stage of the Finance Bill (Sir Geoffrey Howe and team).

On Friday 16th July there would be Private Members' Bills: Mr. Shersby's Stock Exchange (Competition of Bargains) Bill, Mr. Sydney Bidwell's Motor-Cycle (Crash Helmets) (Religious Exemptions) Bill, and those of Miss Jo Richardson, Mr. Kenneth Clarke and Mr. Robin Corbett.

On Monday 19th July there would be Completion of the Remaining stages of the Finance Bill. This would be followed by Motions on Child Benefit Regulations. This would be followed

by Financial Assistance to Kearney and Trecker Marwin Limited (Mr. Tom King), the Consumer Transactions (Restrictions on Statements) Order (Mr. Lamont), the Mail Order Transactions (Information) Order (Mr. Lamont), and the Regional Employment Premium Order.

2. Matters Arising on Business

There was a discussion and the following points were agreed:

- i) We should make a vigorous protest that the remaining stages of the Finance Bill were being rushed through without an opportunity for adequate study of additional government amendments.
- ii) We should not vote against the 3rd Reading of the Finance Bill on 19th July.

3. Prospects for the Remainder of the Session

Mr. Atkins reported on the possibility of the House sitting into August and returning in September to complete the Government's legislative programme. It was noted that the Lords would not wish to sit in September unless the Commons also sat. It was agreed that we should not provide pairs for the Government if they insisted on sitting into August.

4. Report of the Houghton Commission

Lord Thorneycroft reported on the likely recommendations of this Report, which was expected to be presented to the Government shortly. There was a discussion and the following points were agreed:

- i) Mr. Atkins would seek to find out the plans for and timing of publication of the Report.
- ii) We should reject the likely proposal in the report that the tax payer should finance the general activities of political parties; we should refuse the money and we would reverse any legislation on coming into power.
- iii) We would make our position public at an early stage and Lord Thorneycroft would inform the 1922 Committee the following evening.
- iv) We accepted, however, that there remained a case for financial assistance to political parties in respect of MPs' parliamentary duties.
- v) We would seek to meet the argument that would undoubtedly be used against us - viz that we could depend upon a steady income from large corporations - by pointing out that a much larger proportion of our income came from individual small subscriptions than was the case with the Labour Party.

4. Discussion on Policy

There was a discussion on progress of the examination of the reports from the Policy Groups and it was agreed that all papers yet to be considered by the Shadow Cabinet should consist of a short summary of the general strategy, and indicating the legislation required and the financial consequences. All details of the proposals would be in an Appendix.

The Meeting closed at 6.12 p.m.