

CONFIDENTIAL

COPY NO. 1...

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

239TH MEETING

5.00 p.m., Wednesday, 28th March 1979, in the
Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the 237th Meeting.
2. Future Business.
3. Forthcoming Events.
4. Any other business.

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held at 10.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 28th March 1979, in the Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

Present: Mrs. Thatcher (in the Chair)

Mr. Whitelaw, Sir Keith Joseph, Lord Carrington, Lord Thorneycroft, Lord Hailsham, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Mr. Prior, Mr. Pym, Sir Ian Gilmour, Mr. Jenkin, Mr. Peyton, Mr. Neave, Mr. Heseltine, Mr. St. John Stevas, Mr. Maude, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Nott, Mrs. Oppenheim, Mr. King, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Carlisle, Mr. Biffen.

Mr. Atkins (part of the time)

In attendance: Mr. Butler, Mr. Stanley, Mr. Patten, Mr. Wolfson, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Nicholson.

There was a discussion on the political situation arising as a result of the defeat of the Government a few minutes earlier on a vote of confidence. The following points were agreed:

(i) The first principle to be accepted was that the Government had lost its authority, could not regain that authority and could do nothing in Parliament without the agreement of the Opposition Parties. Mr. Atkins would be invited to bear it in mind in his communications with the Government through the usual channels.

(ii) The Government would undoubtedly wish to postpone the date of the election to May 10th. We should press strongly for April 26th and would indicate our preparedness for the House to take the essential Government business on Friday and, if necessary, on Saturday.

(iii) A statement would be issued in the name of the Shadow Cabinet indicating that the Government, having been defeated in the House of Commons had no longer any authority to govern. Parliament should be dissolved and an election called immediately.

(iv) In particular, the Government should not introduce anything resembling a Budget statement.

(v) We would indicate our intention to honour the Government's commitment on pensions.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the full Shadow Cabinet would be at 10.30 a.m. the following morning to complete the discussion of the Manifesto.

Conservative Research Department,
24 Old Queen Street, London, SW1.

DJN/MHM
2.7.79