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GOVERNMENT DEFEATS ON THE FLOOR

1977/78

5 December 1977	Standing Order 9 debate on the Crown Agents
7 December 1977	Scotland Bill Committee, Clause 40 on National Pay Policy
23 January 1978	Supply Day. Debate on Agriculture, on Motion on Green Pound
25 January 1978	Scotland Bill Committee. Cunningham Amendment on 40% for Referendum.
"	Grimond Amendment to exclude Orkneys and Shetlands
14 February 1978	Scotland Bill Report. Dalyell New Clause on timing of referendum.
15 February 1978	Scotland Bill Report - 2 votes on 40%
19 April 1978	Wales Bill Committee. Commencement Clause
"	" 40%
8 May 1978	Finance Bill Committee. 1P off income tax
9 May 1978	Finance Bill Committee Starting point for higher rate of tax.
19 July 1978	Wales Bill Lords Amendment on dual mandate
20 July 1978	Wales Bill Lords Amendment on forestry
24 July 1978	Dock Labour Scheme

26 July [bis]

Scotland

8.5.78

The Government were defeated (majority 8) on an Amendment to the Finance Bill moved by the Opposition to reduce the standard rate of income tax by 1p.

9.5.78

Government defeat (majority 2) on an Opposition Amendment to the Finance Bill which raised the starting points for the higher rate of income tax by £1,000.

16.5.78-27.6.78

In the Standing Committee on the Finance Bill there were seven tied votes, 24 concessions either accepting the Amendment outright or promising action on Report, and 16 undertakings to give further consideration. The principal achievements were to show up the Government's total failure to extend the Capital Gains Tax concessions (granted in the Bill to individuals) to the whole area of Trusts; to force a tied vote on the principle of retrospective legislation; and to get Government agreement to a substantial number of individually minor points on taxation of family companies and other matters. Committee stage took a week longer than expected by the Government, creating difficulties for them in their programme. They had hoped to complete the Finance Bill before the Scotland Bill was returned from the House of Lords.

Bill

The following were the main achievements on the Finance Bill Standing Committee:

1. To obtain a commitment from the Government to improve the Capital Gains Tax reliefs as they affect the family business.
2. To point out a host of possible improvements in the profit sharing proposals, based on earlier studies by the Party in connection with its 1977 Green Paper on the subject.
3. To obtain a full debate on the new clause tabled at short notice by the Government, which was intended to provide tax relief on redundancy payments to - among other - steel industry workers.
4. Jointly with back benchers of other parties, the Conservatives secured a Government commitment to relieve the disabled from vehicle excise duty.
5. The Government were forced to delay phasing out of the lower "concessionary" rate of Development Land Tax.
6. To secure reconsideration of an important plea by the shipping industry for better tax treatment of consortium companies.

19.7.78

Wales Bill. Government defeat on Lords Amendment on dual mandate.

20.7.78

Wales Bill. Government defeat on Lords Amendment on forestry.

24.7.78

Government defeat on Dock Labour Scheme which implemented the Dock Work Regulation Act 1976.

OPPOSITION ACHIEVEMENTS

23.1.78

A debate on Agriculture, on a Motion that the Green Pound should be devalued by 7½% was mounted by the Opposition on a Supply Day. The Government amended the Motion that the Green Pound should be devalued by 5%, but this Amendment was defeated by 291 - 280. The Motion was then passed by 291 - 281. The Government accepted the decision of the House and applied for a 7½% devaluation.

25.1.78

SCOTLAND BILL

As a result of pressure from the Opposition Front Bench (Mr Pym) the Government did not move their Motion to alter the time of the guillotine. As a result it was possible to vote on George Cunningham's Amendment that if 40% did not vote for devolution in Scotland in the Referendum it would not go ahead, and the Government were defeated by 166 - 151. In the following division two Government Whips and two SNP Members loitered in the division lobby with the object of preventing the next Amendment (Mr Grimond's to allow Orkney and Shetland to decide their own future in the Referendum instead of being counted with the rest of Scotland) being moved before the guillotine fell at 11. The Serjeant was sent to report on what was happening and on receiving his report the Chair instructed the tellers to announce their figures. In this division the Government were defeated by 168 - 142. There was time for Mr Grimond to move his Amendment, on which the Government were defeated by 204 - 118, the increased majority being a result of anger among Labour Members at the behaviour of their Whips. On the following day the Leader of the House apologised for what had happened.

26.1.78

CIVIL AVIATION BILL The Government were defeated three times in Standing Committee

14.2.78

SCOTLAND BILL

The Government were defeated on a New Clause to the Scotland Bill at Report Stage moved by Mr. Tam Dalyell who was supported by the Conservative Opposition in the vote. The New Clause provided that the referendum shall not be held until three months has elapsed after polling day of a General Election. This New Clause could have a restrictive effect on the Prime Minister's choice of date for a General Election.

15.2.78

The Government were defeated on Report Stage of the Scotland Bill when they sought to reverse their defeat in Committee when an Amendment was carried which provided that at least 40% of the total electorate in Scotland must vote 'yes' in the Referendum. A subsequent Amendment moved by the Government to alter 40% to one third was also defeated. A large number of Labour Members abstained in both votes.

19.4.78

Two Government defeats on Wales Bill. 1. By 27 votes on Clause 82 (the commencement clause) and by 72 on Amendment 325 to Clause 83 which requires 40% of the electorate to vote for devolution.

OPPOSITION ACHIEVEMENTS 1977/78

5.12.77

Government defeated in the vote at the end of the debate under Standing Order 9 on the loss of over £200M by the Crown Agents. The disagreement with the Government was on whether the next inquiry should be in public, or in private as proposed by the Government. On 8 December the Prime Minister announced that the inquiry would be in public.

7.12.77

The Government were defeated by one vote on Clause 40 Stand Part of the Scotland Bill. Clause 40 is "...a Scottish Secretary shall have regard to such considerations of national pay policy as may be specifically brought to his attention by a Minister of the Crown."