

CONFIDENTIAL

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LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

72ND MEETING

2.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m. Wednesday 23rd July 1975, in
the Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of 70th and 71st Meetings - attached.
2. Future business.
3. Any other business.

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CFP/SMW
22.7.75

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 72nd Meeting held at 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 23rd July 1975, in the Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

Present: Mrs. Thatcher (In the Chair)

Sir Keith Joseph, Lord Hailsham,
Sir Geoffrey Howe, Mr. Prior,
Mr. Jenkin, Mr. Payton, Mr. Maude,
Mr. St. John-Stevas, Mr. Heseltine,
Mr. Raison, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Neave,
Mr. Younger, Mr. Fowler, Mrs. Oppenheim,
Mr. Jopling, Lord Thorneycroft.

Mr. Atkins

Mr. Shelton, Mr. Patten, Mr. Ridley,
Mr. Nicholson (In attendance).

Apologies: Mr. Whitelaw, Mr. Maudling, Mr. Gilmour,
Lord Carrington, Mr. Buchanan-Smith.

1. Proposed Business of the Week

Mrs. Thatcher outlined the proposed business for the week 28th July to 4th August.

On Monday, 28th July there would be the first day of the Report Stage of the Community Land Bill (Mr. Raison, Mr. Rossi and team).

On Tuesday, 29th July Mr. Rooker would seek leave to introduce his Royal Palace of Westminster (Appropriation) Bill under the 10 Minute Rule, and this would be followed by the remaining stages of the Community Land Bill.

On Wednesday, 30th July Dr. Marshall would seek leave to introduce his Caravan Rating Bill under the 10 Minute Rule, and this would be followed by the first day of the Report Stage of the Employment Protection Bill (Mr. Prior, Mr. Hayhoe, Mr. Brittan, Mr. Madel).

On Thursday, 31st July there would be all the stages of the Consolidated Fund (Appropriation) Bill, with a debate on subjects to be raised by Members.

On Friday, 1st August there would be Government business: the remaining stages of the Criminal Jurisdiction Bill (Mr. Neave, Mr. Miscampbell); motions to consider the Diseases of Animals (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order and the Shipbuilding Industry (No. 2) (Northern Ireland) Order (Mr. Biggs-Davison); the undertaking with the Caledonian MacBrayne Ltd. (Mr. Buchanan-Smith); and the Lords' Amendments to the Social Security Pensions Bill (Mr. Fowler, Mr. Clarke).

On Monday, 4th August there would be the remaining stages of the Employment Protection Bill.

/... 2. Matters arising

2. Matters arising on Business

It was agreed that we should press for a half day's debate on Amendments to the Price Code, if possible before the end of the month when these were to come into operation. We should also seek to postpone the debate on the Lords Amendments to the Housing Finance (Special Provisions) Bill until the autumn, as starting the new session by opposing this Bill would encourage Party morale. With reference to remaining business before the House rose (probably on 8th August) it was agreed that we should argue that there was no urgency at all for the Petroleum and Submarine Pipelines Bill and the Employment Protection Bill.

It was agreed that Mr. Atkins would seek to keep pairing before the House rose to an inescapable minimum.

3. Voting on the Second Reading of the Remuneration, Charges and Grants Bill.

There was a discussion. The fear was expressed that many M.P.s who had reluctantly abstained on the main question at the end of the debate on the White Paper the previous evening, would be very unwilling to abstain again, and that there was therefore a danger that, if the Party as a whole were instructed to abstain again, significant numbers would vote both for and against the Government. On the other hand, we had indicated that, despite our substantial reservations over the Government's Bill (its effects on the law, its increases in housing subsidies, and its probable overall ineffectiveness) we would not seek to impede the Government's belated efforts to tackle inflation.

It was agreed that we should abstain on the Second Reading but that Sir Geoffrey Howe, in his speech, would make clear that, if the Government refused to publish the Reserve Powers Bill (which should be referred to as "the Secret Powers Bill"), or amend the Bill in at least some of the ways that we wished, such as annexing the White Paper to the Bill as a Schedule, we should be likely to vote against the Bill on the Third Reading. It was also agreed that, where necessary, members of the Shadow Cabinet would assist Mr. Atkins in persuading M.P.s to abstain again.

The meeting closed at 3.15 p.m.