

CONFIDENTIAL

COPY NO.

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

194TH MEETING

5.00 p.m., Wednesday, 1st March 1978, in the
Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the 190th Meeting.
2. Future Business.
3. Forthcoming Events.
4. Law and Order: A New Resolve, a paper
by Mr. Whitelaw and Mr. Howell, LCC(78)173
- attached.
5. Any other business.

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CFP/MHM
27.2.78

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 194th Meeting held at 5.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 1st March 1978, in the Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

- Present: Mrs. Thatcher (in the Chair)
- Mr. Whitelaw, Sir Keith Joseph, Lord Thorneycroft, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Sir Ian Gilmour, Mr. Davies, Mr. Jenkin, Mr. Peyton, Mr. Heseltine, Mr. St. John Stevas, Mr. Nott, Mrs. Oppenheim, Mr. King, Mr. Taylor.
- Mr. Atkins.
- In attendance: Sir Michael Havers, Lord Ferrers, Lord Denham, Mr. Howell, Mr. Butler, Mr. Stanley, Mr. Patten, Mr. Houston.
- Apologies: Lord Carrington, Lord Hailsham, Mr. Prior, Mr. Pym, Mr. Neave, Mr. Maude, Mr. Edwards.

1. Proposed Business for the Week 6th-13th March

On Monday, 6th March, there would be a Debate on the Security Situation in Northern Ireland on a Motion for the Adjournment. This would be followed by Motions on Northern Ireland Orders relating to Appropriation, Industries Development, Property, Rehabilitation of Offenders, and Sexual Offences, and by a Motion to the Firearms (Variation and Fees) (Northern Ireland) Order.

On Tuesday, 7th March, Mr. T. Newton would seek leave to introduce his Disabled Persons (Mobility after Retirement) Bill under the 10 Minute Rule. This would be followed by the third day of the Wales Bill (Mr. Pym and team).

On Wednesday, 8th March, Mr. N. Ridley would seek leave to introduce his Finance (Reduction of Taxation) Bill under the 10 Minute Rule. This would be followed by the fourth day of the Wales Bill (Mr. Pym and team).

On Thursday, 9th March, there would be a Supply Day. This would be followed by Opposed Private Business.

On Friday, 10th March, there would be the Private Members' Motions of Mr. J. Cope, Sir Brandon Rhys Williams and Mr. W. Hamilton.

On Monday, 13th March, there would be a debate on a Motion on the Statement on the Defence Estimates, Cmnd. 7099.

2. Matters Arising on Business

There was a discussion of certain points and it was agreed that all commitments should be carefully scrutinised for their expenditure implications. No commitment should be made without clearance of any effect on spending from Sir Geoffrey Howe and the Treasury team. It was suggested that there could be certain inconsistencies between the 10 Minute Rule Bill on disabled persons and the 10 Minute Rule Bill on reduction of taxation, but it was agreed that the additional expenditure involved in the former was small and the Bill should be supported.

3. Subjects for the Supply Day

There was a discussion and it was agreed that:

(i) The Supply Day on Thursday, 9th March, would be used for discussing the financial situation of the British Steel Corporation.

(ii) A Motion would be put down approving the Report of the Select Committee.

(iii) The Government should be asked to rearrange business so that the debate could last for the whole day.

(iv) Land nationalisation and Scottish affairs would be considered as subjects for future Supply Day debates.

4. Immigration

Mr. Whitelaw summed up the latest developments on immigration. He intended to hold back a statement on our new policy proposals until after the publication of the Select Committee Report. The Central Council on 7th April was considering a Motion on immigration and that might provide a suitable opportunity. The BBC were producing a major programme on immigration the following week, but this was not expected to be very constructive.

5. Law and Order

Mr. Whitelaw introduced his paper, "Law and Order: A New Resolve", LCC(78)173. He suggested that in place of 'Law and Order' it should be retitled "The Protection of the Citizen".

There was a discussion of the paper and it was agreed that

(i) With regard to costing our commitment to the police, we should commit ourselves only to pay at least enough to recruit the required number of policemen and to prevent experienced officers from leaving in large numbers.

(ii) A referendum on capital punishment would be undesirable because of its implications for other policy areas and the danger of undermining Parliamentary government.

(iii) Any published statements of our policy should make it clear that we did not believe additional resources alone to be the answer to law and order problems but that the humanising of our society had an important contribution to make.

(iv) A statement in the paper that "The shorter the sentence is, the better" was open to misinterpretation and should be rephrased.

Suggestions on corporal punishment, a crime of vandalism, Special Constables, violence on television, community homes, school activities, controlling obscene displays and parental responsibility were put forward. It was agreed that members would write to Mr. Whitelaw with suggestion and the paper would then be redrafted and circulated.

The meeting closed at 6.45 p.m.