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10 DOWNING STREET

28 June 1982

The Rt Hon Cecil Parkinson MP  
Chairman  
The Conservative Party  
32 Smith Square  
LONDON SW1

*Dear Cecil*

At our meeting with Nigel Lawson this morning, we agreed that I should prepare a preliminary synopsis and division of responsibility for the potential authors of our Autumn collection of pamphlets.

We agreed that these pamphlets should be clearly and vigorously written and should be aimed at "opinion-formers" - as widely defined as possible - rather than at a mass popular audience. Nigel Lawson's Hutber lecture (reported in part in the Sunday Telegraph, 27 June) is just the sort of stuff we are after. The intention is to demonstrate that:

- (a) the Government has a policy which is identifiable, defensible and consistent, and which has been and will continue to be pursued with determination;
- (b) the Government has not gone to sleep towards the end of the Parliament, as Governments tend to do, but is still able to muster a respectable quantum of energy and intellectual vim.

Accordingly, while the pamphlets must expound what the Government has done, our achievements should be listed as examples of a continuing Right Approach, and not as laurels on which we intend to rest.

I suggest - it is only suggestion - the following division.

1. A stable fiscal and monetary framework - Nigel Lawson is most of the way there with his Zurich speech and Hutber lecture.
2. Taking on the big battalions - the reform of trade union law and of the nationalised industries. The struggle to re-orient the economy away from the corporate state and the class war. The revival of the middle-class and small business. David Howell has eloquently elaborated these themes in his book.
3. Responsibility and the family - it is the Tories who have begun the irreversible shift of power to working people and their families. The sale of council houses, the encouragement of home ownership and home improvement, the spread of private health insurance, the improvement of choice in state education. Obviously Norman Fowler.
4. The quality of life - the revival of the inner cities, improvements in housing and the preservation of landscape

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and architecture. The Government's attempt to bring the human scale back into British life. A theme much neglected in Conservative argument, and one which has proved fertile recruiting ground for the SDP. Our achievements are still underrated, and I would have thought Michael Heseltine would be the person to uprate them.

5. A determined and respected nation - the Falklands campaign is obviously the prime badge of the Government's determination. But we also ought to mention the strength of the Government's stance within the Community and the strengthening of our relations with Washington. The point I hope we can make is that determination and clarity - letting people know where we stand - have helped us to get on better with all our allies - with France, say, no less than with the United States. Would this theme appeal to Hugh Thomas?

This division of labour does not cope satisfactorily with at least two topics: unemployment, and law and order. My feeling is that these are too difficult to tackle as independent subjects on their own. It is not simply that we are short of good news to report; it is also that it is our belief that neither unemployment nor lawlessness has a single cause, and that therefore they do not lend themselves to "theme papers" and, if so handled, the result is more likely to look like a series of excuses which, however accurate a reflection of the truth, is likely to appear less convincing than one big excuse.

My inclination, therefore, is that we should tackle these two topics - and confront them squarely - where they crop up in their natural context:

Unemployment - ought to be discussed both in 2 above in terms of this shift of manpower out of dying heavy industries, many of them nationalised; and in 4 - our efforts to revive inner cities.

Law and order is relevant both to 3 in terms of our efforts to shore up family life and improve the family services; and to 4 - our efforts to prevent inner cities from becoming breeding grounds of crime and racial conflict.

*Yours ever  
ferdy*

FERDINAND MOUNT