

Conservative and Unionist Central Office

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Memorandum from: David Boddy

To: The Chairman

cc Mr A S Garner

Mr C Lawson

Date: 12th November 1982

Prime Ministerial Tours

Following our bi-lateral meeting earlier this month, Chris Lawson, Tony Garner and myself met on Tuesday, 9th November, to discuss the Prime Ministerial Tours.

The attached paper is the result of that discussion, with some recommendations.

Prime Ministerial Tours

STYLE:

There were seen to be four types of presentation of the Prime Minister during the election campaign.

1. The Presidential style
2. The Prime Ministerial style
3. The Prime Minister and her team
4. The Prime Minister as 'Managing Director of G.B. Ltd'

There are many similarities between each of the above - but there are also differences worth exploring.

1. Presidential style

This would be a campaign featuring the Prime Minister as the 'lone ranger' of the Tory Party, leading the country to still greater heights. She would be portrayed as the person who has brought Britain up by her boot-straps almost single-handed, and upon whom the nation is depending in the years to come.

There are several disadvantages with this approach, not least of all the Prime Minister's personal rating in the polls and how this could change between now and the actual election.

The main advantage, however, is that the Prime Minister would compare immensely favourably with the opposition leaders.

2. Prime Ministerial style

This style of campaign would feature the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street simply getting on running the country. It is a 'quiet', business as usual, approach. (This was the style of Mr. Callaghan in 1979.) There appears little advantage in running such a campaign, apart from the fact that you highlight the message that we are businesslike, have only just begun the job, and that there is much more to be done. (A further disadvantage is that this style of campaign is not at all suited to the Prime Minister herself). If we want a dull campaign, with no frills, this approach is worth considering.

3. Prime Minister and her team

This style of campaign draws heavily on the Prime Minister's style of leadership which is well perceived by the electorate. She takes an active, busy part in the campaign. It is high profile for the Prime Minister. But at the same time, emphasis is given to her as the leader of a team of Ministers. That team is infinitely superior to anything on offer from the Opposition. It is a well co-ordinated, fast moving, on-top of life style of campaign, featuring younger members of the team.

4. Managing Director of G.B. Ltd.

This, in many ways, is similar to 3 above. But it is less 'philosophical' in approach. Britain is a business (or stage?) and we're the best managers of it.

- a) The Prime Minister would be seen to be the board chairman, leading an efficient group of directors.
- b) Her position would be that of someone above the political hurly-burly.
- c) She would be portrayed as the leader of the country and nation, as distinct from just another political leader.
- d) She would be regarded in all publicity and events as someone whose only responsibility was that of the government of the nation. The grubby politicking would be left to her team. This approach, for the Prime Minister, is far more statesmanlike than any other, but without losing the look of efficiency.

Summary: The consensus emerging after detailed discussion was that a combination of styles 3 and 4 above would probably be right to adopt (and adapt) during the campaign. In essence, the view is that we do need a lively campaign, with high profile for the Prime Minister and selected members of her team. At the same time, we must make maximum use of her occupancy of No. 10. We are governing. We are governing well. We want the campaign to reflect the message: "Let's carry on with the job - there's no need to change".

SHE'S MADE A FIRST CLASS START - NOW LET HER FINISH THE JOB.

The Callaghan approach (which was very laid back) did not succeed. We are a lively party, lively government - with a vigorous, determined Prime Minister. The style must reflect this.

Several interesting comments were expressed during the discussion on style which I summarise below.

a) The Prime Minister should not only be seen to be concerned with immediate issues, but seen to have a vision which takes the nation through in the long term - for the sake of our children.

b) If she took the part of a 'chairman of the board' she must be seen to represent all shareholders of the nation; the long term, statesman's approach would help this.

c) The importance of the government team should be expressed in the campaign. The best way of doing so would be to pick two or three supporting characters (Cecil Parkinson, Norman Tebbit, Geoffrey Howe and possibly Michael Heseltine) to help the Prime Minister. Their programmes should be directly co-ordinated with the Prime Minister's.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

/d)

d) The Party Chairman should at all times fulfill the role of campaign co-ordinator and linkman in London, particularly when the Prime Minister is out of town. E.g., press conferences should be taken and chaired by the Party Chairman, when not under the control of the Prime Minister.

Elements of the Prime Minister's campaign

There are five basic elements of the Prime Minister's campaign.

1. Rallies
2. Media
3. Tours
4. P.E.B.s
5. Briefing

1. RALLIES

While recognising the Prime Minister's desire to spend the majority of time in the strong areas (critical seats), it was also thought necessary that her presence is felt in the major conurbations in the north of the country. Rally venues should be considered in terms of all or some of the following:

- a) Birmingham
- b) Manchester
- c) Yorkshire (Leeds)
- d) Cardiff
- e) Scotland (Edinburgh)

BRISTOL.

6 NORTHAMPTON 5 ?

Additionally, special interest rallies should be considered as part of the programme. Such rallies should be aimed towards specific target groups, e.g. trade unionists and youth. (The number of rallies will depend on the length of campaign. They would all be 'controlled' events.)

The idea of a 'success' rally was also considered. Here, the Prime Minister would have the opportunity of meeting selected business people who over the last four years had been able to demonstrate particular commercial success. They would need to be carefully picked, and there are media disadvantages with this.

2. MEDIA

This next election promises to be even more of a media circus than the last, with the development of Channel 4 and Breakfast Television over the next few months.

We must be constantly mindful of the need to avoid television pictures which show the Prime Minister being pelted by rent-a-mob eggs and tomatoes, etc. However, we must also have a presence in parts of the country which are not so friendly. How are these two requirements reconciled? We should devise a campaign where the Prime Minister undertakes certain media engagements in the difficult areas allowing her to be saved from exposure of rent-a-mob crowds. E.g. appearing on the Nationwide programme from Newcastle or Manchester. For the viewer, it would be plainly obvious that she was in such a place. This must help get across the impression of higher visibility in those areas than would otherwise be the case, and would avoid exposing the Prime Minister to the mobs.

I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT IN DEVISING A FINAL PROGRAMME, A SCHEDULE OF MEDIA EVENTS SHOULD BE USED TO FORM THE BASIS OF SUCH A PROGRAMME AROUND WHICH THE OTHER ELEMENTS MENTIONED ABOVE WOULD BE ARRANGED.

This schedule would include such programmes as Nationwide, TV Eye, the Bolton 500, Panorama, as well as regular interviews for ITN and BBC News. If scheduled sufficiently well in advance, these appearances could be placed strategically around the country during the campaign for maximum impact.

There are, however, other particular media requirements which need consideration:

a) Television debate: I understand from London Weekend Television that consideration is being given to staging a major television debate between the Prime Minister and opposition leaders. Little information is available at this moment. Last time we were wrong-footed for a couple of days at the beginning of the campaign because we did not take a view as to whether the Party Leader should appear in a TV debate. This time we have sufficient advance notice for a discussion on this issue to take place. There are both advantages and disadvantages of such a debate. Its timing is important, as are the people who would be invited to appear on it. Before being dismissed, I believe this is one issue which deserves special attention.

b) Breakfast Television: It is impossible at this early stage to say what influence Breakfast TV will have on the next election. If it is still novel, and if the campaign is particularly interesting, my hunch is that it will attract a disproportionately large share of the audience. In that case, our schedule of events should be mindful of the needs of Breakfast TV. One suggestion to arise out of our discussions is that on one or two occasions during the campaign, special events featuring the Prime Minister should be organised for Breakfast TV.

/The effects

The effects would carry through for the evening newspapers. A Breakfast TV news conference in the final week, or on the final Sunday, should be given strong consideration. This, as with other special programmes, could come from outside London, e.g. Midlands.

3. TOURS

A number of points arose during the course of our discussions:-

- i) The need to start the campaign in the country with a band-wagon style send off.
- ii) The need to be constantly mindful of the Prime Minister's health and not to over-stretch her, particularly in the early stages. We want to finish very strongly, not fizzle out in the last few days.
- iii) The need to make use of local radio and newspapers while on the regional tours. (Last time, largely because of interference at the last moment, there was only a limited amount of local radio and newspaper contact. This rather spoiled the purpose of the regional visits and caused undue antagonism with regard to television and radio people).
- iv) Times of events should be co-ordinated for maximum impact on TV News bulletins. To that end we must consider, again Breakfast TV. The key bulletins would still appear to be the early evening news on BBC and ITV for pictures of campaigning during the day. The late evening news on the two major channels should primarily cover the political speech of the day. Other special programmes would feature the rest of the campaign.
- v) The Prime Minister should be taken exclusively to meet supporters and be seen to be making maximum use of her exceptional ability to meet people, but only in areas where we know that support is certain.
- vi) That pre-notification of tour stops should be kept to a minimum and only such information as is needed to be given to the broadcasters and press on an operational basis, should be given before a tour is commenced. The argument is not only security, but to prevent rent-a-mob crowds gathering.
- vii) Among picture ideas to arise during initial discussions were:
 - Use of picture contact with Service personnel (a visit to Portsmouth marginal seats);
 - Visit to technological based companies who had taken on staff during the last four years;
 - Visit to BL (Jaguar particularly);

/Making

Making maximum use of contact with new owners of council houses (this could give an opportunity of showing the Prime Minister in a family-type environment);

Visit to companies that we have privatised, to be seen talking to workers who have taken out shares in their companies, e.g. National Freight;

Visits to nursery units to be seen talking to successful young business people who have started up in the last four years. If we could find some unemployed people who had got up on their own two feet through the use of Government funds, these would make good pictures too.

(Area offices should be set on the alert for examples of the above).

viii) The timing of the election will affect whether the nuclear issue and the Common Market issue play prominent parts. If they are to be in the minds of the electorate during the campaign, (which I think is likely), we should devise visits to cover these stories.

ix) The entrance to 10 Downing Street should be used in picture terms as much as possible. This would accord with the style of a Prime Ministerial- team leader type campaign. Early morning pictures of the Prime Minister leaving Downing Street to come to Central Office would be useful for Breakfast TV. If she got into the habit of making some harmless comment as she came out of Downing Street each morning (or every other morning), we could almost guarantee that pictures appeared on Breakfast TV on a daily basis. This would be part of establishing the fact that we are the occupiers of Downing Street at the moment and that the country is well governed. (We would need to check whether any cameras could be allowed inside No. 10 during the campaign. If they were, there should be full use of atmosphere shots of the Prime Minister and her team at work.)

Press Conferences

The Prime Minister's involvement in press conferences should be at least as heavy as the last campaign - if not heavier, particularly if there is to be less touring.

Consideration should be given to holding the manifesto press conference and the launch press conference outside of Central Office so that all the journalists who wish to attend can do so. (Last time about 100 were locked out of the major press conferences through lack of space, which caused much resentment.)

/The conferences

The conferences should always be chaired by the Party Chairman, who in the Prime Minister's absence on a regional tour should also be the principal participant. Other ministers should feature on the platform as last time, but a central theme should be agreed in advance.

Regional press conferences in Scotland and Wales should be considered by the Prime Minister, depending on other arrangements in those areas. The foreign press should be restricted to the final 10 minutes of the press conference.

Press Lobbies

In the last election much difficulty arose because of the Party Leader's reluctance, at the time, to hold press lobbies with the travelling press party. Much water has gone under the bridge since then, and I am sure there will be more confidence to do so next time. These could be particularly valuable and if planned in advance could help ease the anxieties of the touring press. In addition to what the Prime Minister does on tour, the Party Chairman should make a habit of seeing the Sunday correspondents in London on Saturday mornings for a lobby. He will also be the key lobby contact for the political editors who remain in London. The Leader's party and the Chairman's office must be kept fully in touch with each other. The tour press secretary will have a vital role here.

Sundays

These are difficult days in the campaign and should probably be used, primarily, for rest and reflection! However, in media terms we will nevertheless need to provide pictures for the news bulletins.

Last time we used one Sunday for a special photocall of the Party Leader in Victoria Embankment Gardens, plus a church visit. The second Sunday of the campaign was used for a meeting of the Leader's Consultative Committee. On the final Sunday we had the CTU rally which set the tone for the run-up week. We will need to consider something similar this time.

General principles of the Tour

At this early stage it is probably useful to talk in terms of general principles for any tour.

- 1) Where the Prime Minister needs to be seen, but where the area is unlikely to be friendly, e.g. the north, her programme should be heavily loaded towards the media.

/Where possible

Where possible she should undertake national programmes such as Election Call, Nationwide, etc., from regional locations. This would have the benefit of getting the message across while in the regions without exposing her to the 'tomato throwers'. Alternatively, in the favourable areas, e.g. Home Counties, South East, etc., the profile should be high on meeting the public, which is a definite strength of the Prime Minister and which makes good television.

2) Rallies should be all ticket.

3) Press party on tour. The press party should travel with the Prime Minister and not be separated as occurred in the Conservative campaign in February 1974 - and as also happened with Jim Callaghan in 1979. (The security problems of such an exercise CAN be overcome. We must not under any circumstances allow the mandarins to separate the Prime Minister from the people who will be writing about her.)

4) Length of the campaign. From all points of view it would appear that a short campaign (2½ weeks) is most desirable.

4. P.E.B.s

No matter what the final allocation for P.E.B.s, Chris Lawson takes the view that the Prime Minister should be used in no more than two, probably the first and last. The present offer from the broadcasters is that Labour and Conservative should have five P.E.B.s and the Alliance four. This, I believe, is unacceptable to us.

The broadcasters are also anxious that the campaign is not launched through the use of a Ministerial broadcast. They believe this is an abuse of that facility and that one of the election broadcasts should be used instead to launch the campaign. This is obviously a highly emotive and contentious area which will need to be thrashed out with the broadcasters over the next few months. However, I think we should plan on the basis that we will have a minimum of five and a maximum of six broadcasts. We shall need to decide whether we want to take our option of the eve of poll broadcast which, as the government of the day, we have open to us.

5. BRIEFING

The ability to brief the Prime Minister and her team quickly on running events from the centre will be crucial.

Unlike the last election where matters were very smooth, and few crises arose, I believe that next time will be very different. We shall need a quick method of communicating with the Chairman's Office and the Central Office Press Office. The Chairman's role in the centre is vital.

/While making

While making travelling arrangements, full consideration should be given to the technological requirements of linking word-processors and radio telephones, etc., on the Leader's party, to those in Central Office.

Briefing on what the papers say and a digest of television and radio news bulletins must be organised. Likewise the programme should include regular contact between the Party Chairman and the Prime Minister direct, whether she is in London or the regions.

Constant contact and communication between the Prime Minister and the Party Chairman will do a lot to ensure a successful outcome to the election.

12th November, 1982

Conservative and Unionist Central Office

09 NOV 1982

32 Smith Square Westminster SW1P 3HH Telephone 01-222 9000

Memorandum from: A.S. Garner

To: Mr. Boddy
..... Mr. Lawson
..... c.c. The Chairman —

Date: 5th November 1982

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

General Election - Leader's Tours

Thank you for your memorandum of 5th November re the above. I confirm that I will be present at the meeting on 9th November to discuss this subject and attached is a copy of the secret report produced in connection with the Leader's tours at the last general election.

This was appendix A of my general report on responsibilities at the last election which I sent to the Chairman and which was dated 25th May 1979. Perhaps this will form a useful basis for our discussion on Tuesday.

MS

GENERAL ELECTION - MAY 1979MRS. THATCHER'S TOURS1. Planning and Preparation

The planning for the tours was started in June 1976. From that moment a number of general targets emerged, which were discussed at periodic meetings during the remainder of 1976 and throughout 1977.

I was asked to take on the responsibility for the tours in March 1977 when the outline programme was in its fourth draft.

The broad plan was for Mrs. Thatcher to take the national News Conferences; travel to an Area to undertake a newsworthy visit (or visits) aimed at the early evening television; and a limited number of Major Rallies.

The development of the programme continued through a series of meetings, and Central Office Agents contributed proposals for individual days. This allowed some clear decisions about which items could work.

In anticipation of an Autumn 1978 General Election a full detailed draft was prepared and the first ten days were subjected to considerable discussion during August. A number of agreements were reached at this stage, and it was possible to use this detailed draft as the basis for the actual campaign.

There was a major problem throughout this period - elements for inclusion in the programme were often changed without being inter-related with other elements, with the result that decisions were reached which could not be enacted if we were to achieve other decisions made quite separately. This meant that the items had to be discussed over and over again.

2. Summary of the ToursMonday 10th April

National News Conference - London

Hospital in Swansea

Conservative Club in Swansea West

MAJOR RALLY at City Hall, Cardiff (900)

Bristol United Press, Bristol

Overnight stay in Bristol

Comment: Hospital visit created some surprise for travelling press, but was a success. Club visit was a shambles and a waste of effort. The Rally went well with a good first speech. The visit to newspaper publishers was good and worthwhile in following day

coverage. Interviews with T.V. and Radio were cancelled (having been agreed in three detailed drafts of the programme) by the intervention of a PPS who personally objected to them taking place.

Tuesday 17th April

Coffee with Bristol Candidates
ELECTION CALL from Bristol studios (plus interview)
Kleeneze Brush Factory in Kingswood
High-Speed Train to London with photograph at
Bath
Small meeting in Gravesend (200 plus)

Comment: A varied day - Election Call provided early national coverage, the Brush Factory the pictures and the short evening speech helped to wrap it up. Something for everyone in the travelling press.

Wednesday 18th April

National News Conference - London

Willisham Farm visit in Eye Constituency
Insurance Company Offices in Ipswich
T.V. Interviews
Walkabout and brief speech, Cornhill, Ipswich

Small meeting in Chilwell, Nottingham (200 plus)
Overnight stay in Leicester

Comment: Again a varied day providing many good pictures with a walkabout and a short evening speech.

Tuesday 19th April

Clothing Factory in Leicester
Radio Interview
Meeting with party workers from Leicester
Constituencies
Walkabout in Coalville (Bosworth)
Walkabout in Measham (Loughborough)
Cadbury Factory, Bournville (Selly Oak)
MAJOR RALLY in Birmingham Town Hall (1400 plus)

Comment: Probably too much in this day, but nevertheless a great deal of varied material for local and national press. The walkabout in Coalville was the only one of its kind, and a terrible crush through an open shopping precinct.

Friday 20th April

National News Conference - London

ITN INTERVIEW
Work Centre for Elderly, Paddington
Council House, Ealing
Conservative Club, Ealing North
NATIONWIDE ON THE SPOT

Comment: A deliberately lighter day because of the Nationwide programme. Very nearly a disaster day owing to absence of the police, confined areas with old people and our first major experience with a large number of foreign T.V. crews.

Saturday 21st April

Scientific Instruments Factory, Milton Keynes
Short speech to party workers in Bletchley (150)
Canvassing in Finchley
Visit to Party workers in Hornsey

Comment: The factory visit was a great success (later illustrated when the PM added a visit to micro-chips in his programme) but the early part of Finchley canvassing was a disaster owing to large numbers of press, particularly foreign TV crews again.

Sunday 22nd April

Photo-call with family and colleagues

Monday 23rd April

National News Conference, London
Rington Tea Factory, Newcastle
Short speech to Party workers in Newcastle
(400 plus)
Small meeting in Darlington (200 plus)
Radio interview
Overnight stay at Ainley Top

Comment: A good varied day with good material for all the journalists.

Tuesday 24th April

Visit and short speech at Huddersfield Committee Rooms (East and West)
Walkabout in shopping square in Elland (Sowerby)
Walkabout in supermarket in Brighouse
Visit and short speech at Halifax Committee Rooms
THAMES TV EYE INTERVIEW

Comment: The first real 'whistle-stop' day which was curtailed because of TV Eye interview. Despite this the four visits went well providing good pictures and copy.

Wednesday 25th April

National News Conference, London
JIMMY YOUNG SHOW
BBC RADIO 1 NEWSBEAT
MAJOR RALLY in Leith Town Hall (1100 plus)
Overnight stay in Glasgow

Comment: A shorter day due to the two Radio programmes and a delayed departure to Edinburgh. Good speech at Leith to enthusiastic audience.

Thursday 26th April

Scottish News Conference, Glasgow
TV and Radio Interviews
Meeting with Pakistani Leaders
Twin Spires Creamery (East Aberdeenshire)
Caribonum Factory, Turriff (Banff)
Moray Fish Services, Buckie (Banff)
Small meeting in Elgin Town Hall (Moray and
Nairn (400 plus)

Comment: A very full day with the North East visits being conducted by helicopters. It could possibly have just been completed by road. Whilst each visit did not amount to much, the use of helicopters of this size (24 and 19 seats) created a great deal of attention. The Elgin meeting was the most enthusiastic audience of the tour and provided a fitting end to the day.

Friday 27th April

National News Conference, London

ITN INTERVIEW
Short speech to Party workers at Putney
PEB preparation

Comment: Very brief day with one visit cancelled.

Saturday 28th April

Short speech and visit to Ponders End Conservative Club (Enfield North)
Canvassing in Finchley

Comment: Easy day - no problems with the Press

Sunday 29th April

CTU RALLY at Wembley Conference Centre
PEB Filming

Comment: Rally was a great success.

Monday 30th April

National News Conference, London

Small meeting with Party workers in Ilford (200)
BOLTON 500 - GRANADA TV

Comment: Another short day due to TV programme which was a great success.

Tuesday 1st May

National News Conference, London

Short speech and Walkabout in shopping centre in
Urmston (Stretford)

Short speech in car park of Prestwich Conservative
Club

TV and Radio interviews

MAJOR RALLY in Bolton Town Hall (1100)

Comment: A good day to close the touring stage of the
campaign. The speech at Bolton was well received.

Wednesday 2nd May

National News Conference, London

ITN and BBC TV INTERVIEWS

Whistle-stop tour through South London Committee
Rooms, calling at: Fulham, Battersea South,
Norwood, Lewisham West and Dulwich.

Central Office Staff

Public meeting in Finchley (300 plus)

Comment: Tour did a lot to encourage Candidates and
Party workers, but travelling Press were a problem.
Scuffles outside the Finchley meeting were the only
serious incidents throughout the campaign.

Thursday 3rd May

Committee Rooms and Polling Stations in Finchley

3. Logistics

- (a) Aircraft - these were chartered from British Island
Airways - two turbo-prop Heralds were used to Swansea -
on all other trips a BAC 111. BIA gave magnificent
service, and the use of a jet was a great help. All
flights were from Gatwick.

The helicopters in North East Scotland were from
Bristow helicopters.

- (b) Coaches - three coaches were hired from Wallace Arnold
(Evan Evans). One was converted to a travelling office
with a radiophone. The other two were standard for
the travelling Press.
- (c) Cars - the cars came from R.J. Parr - four were needed
on some occasions. The service was excellent.
- (d) Train - the Victoria/Gatwick service was used for days
with flights. The High-Speed Train was taken from Bristol.

4. Travelling Press

There were serious problems with numbers because of the world-wide interest, and we were accompanied by as many as 70 on occasions. The foreign television crews were the major problem; generally the domestic press were very co-operative.

Mrs. Thatcher was superb with the cameramen when visiting factories and on walkabouts giving them every picture they needed. As the tour progressed she spent more time talking to them so that by the end even the most cynical of them were 'enjoying' the tour.

The presence of two press officers and a secretary was essential and prevented many minor problems experienced in the past.

5. The Team

The complete team worked well together although there was some separation in the various responsibilities, which created some problems and tensions.

6. Conclusions

The whole campaign went better than expected and all objectives were achieved. There were no major problems except the absence of an overall control. In the end this was not a problem, as most members of the team were able to work well together. I believe it is essential that one person should clearly be in charge with everyone understanding the authority.

Looking ahead to the next General Election - I think that whoever is to organise the next tour, that person should be closely associated with all party visits for the Prime Minister from now on. This will build an understanding and authority for the next occasion.

R. Boach :