

PRIME MINISTER

MA

MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN :

POINTS TO MAKE ABOUT APPOINTMENTS

1. Replacement for Lord Farnham
Jim Spicer, not Goodhart
2. ~~Hope~~ ^{Intend} to find Ministerial post for Michael Spicer.
Understand John Gummer thinking of not appointing a new Deputy Chairman, but -
3. Also hope to make David Hunt a Parliamentary Secretary. So will need another Vice Chairman.
Consider putting Jim Spicer in charge of candidates and find another Deputy Chairman for ^{international affairs} ~~candidates~~.
4. Tell John Gummer that you are not proposing to make any change in his own Ministerial position?

F.R.B.

3.9.



Conservative Central Office

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From
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY
John Selwyn Gummer MP

Prime Minister,

The enclosed note is typed by me on the hotel's personal typewriter - my apologies for the quality. Just two points from the Republican Convention.

1. Hong Kong

The Republicans have called for "self-determination for the people of Hong Kong" in their platform. This was inserted against the advice and active efforts of the Administration. I spoke directly to George Schultz who dismissed it as "ridiculous" and "like the British demanding self-determination for the Bay Area of San Francisco".

2. Labour Party

Senator Haxall - the key figure in Party Organisation - put a whole paragraph in his speech comparing the Democrats to the British Labour Party. Not a convincing comparison but you might have it raised and I am getting a verbatim copy in case someone uses it against us as an example of interference in our internal affairs.

I kept Switzerland as a success. I met Hall and we had a good part of an evening together in Dallas.

John



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PRIME MINISTER

Party reorganisation

I. Appointments

We need to replace Lord Fanshawe as Overseas Vice-Chairman. I am concerned to ensure a balance among the vice-chairmen and I therefore proposed Philip Goodhart and we have a date fixed to discuss the matter.

We shall also ^{have} to move on strengthening the Treasurer's Department as Alastair proposes and I shall be getting to you an annotated list of his suggestions as soon as I receive them.

II. Vulnerable Seats

The programme which we discussed is now under way. We expect to have started the rebuilding of constituency organisations in the first list of priority seats in every area by the end of November and have had two review meetings with Area Agents before the week-end meeting between the National Union Officers and the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Party which is fixed for early December.

III.

Party Input into Policy

I am conscious that we do not have enough early warning of the political implications of impending decisions of Departments. Whether it is the decision of dog licencing or the question of the date and nature of the elections to the Inner London Education

Authority, the political input and the consideration of presentational implications has not been sufficient. I think it important for the Chairman to be more involved in Cabinet Committees specifically to cover this area. This is particularly so when a number of different strands of policy come together to create special problems. The interaction of Rate Support Grant, the changes introduced by rate-capping, privatisation, the County Council Elections and the growing Party demand for yet another look at the rating system might be a case in point. If we don't go to some trouble to try to bring all this into a coherent whole then we shall allow our perfectly comprehensible policies to look a ragbag instead of a clearly coherent programme. Perhaps we could discuss this.

IV.

Press

We have not so far succeeded in our Party Press Relations, neither Central Office nor I personally. We have set up a concerted effort for September with the media and I sense that things are beginning to improve so this should be given a further push. The position of Tony Shrimley remains a worry and we are meeting to discuss his future in the first week in September. I fear that his illness has not got any better and he has had further treatment since his return from holiday.