

PERSONAL

PROFESSOR GRIFFITHS

5 June 1990

JOHN WHITTINGDALE

MARK LENNOX BOYD MP

POLICY WORK ETC

I thought it might be worthwhile my setting out on paper where I think we ought to go now.

There will be five main sources of policy ideas for the Manifesto: (a) Ministers and their Departments; (b) backbenchers; (c) No 10 Policy Unit; (d) policy groups; (e) the CPS (and, possibly, the ASI, IEA, IOD etc).

(a) Ministers and their Departments

The Prime Minister should write to Cabinet Ministers as soon as possible both telling them to give us their present and future policy plans and urging them to discuss (b) with backbench officers.

(b) Backbenchers

Chairmen of backbench committees should begin early discussions with MPs; papers should be prepared by each committee and by any other groups of backbenchers who wish to do so. No doubt the Chief Whip can advise which and who. This material should go to Cabinet Ministers, copied to the Prime Minister.

(c) No 10 Policy Unit

We should produce a full paper - each of us providing a couple of sides or so for his own area - based on the proposals



submitted to the Prime Minister earlier. They should be worked out in as much detail as possible and she should receive them in, say, September.

(d) Policy Groups

Cabinet Ministers should chair policy groups on about 8 or 10 topics, along the lines earlier suggested, though perhaps more general and thematic. Membership should be entirely, or almost entirely, outsiders, though one or two MPs might be involved as well. In the Unit, we should draw up a full list of suggested members of policy groups as soon as possible. These should be politically sympathetic experts.

(e) The CPS and others

We should ask David Willetts to have the CPS set up policy groups of its own on those areas - like the family, for example - where we will need a radical input and are unlikely to get it from any other source. I think that the CPS will want to present its policy conclusions to the Prime Minister personally: but Brian and I can set the ball rolling as long as she agrees in principle. Brian and I should also trawl the ASI, IEA, IOD etc on an informal basis.

The material from backbench committees and from policy groups should go to a strategy group of ministers, which should be set up soon and should also oversee the preparations - of a policy nature - for the Party Conference in October, given its great importance. (The Policy Unit and, perhaps, the CPS material should go to the Prime Minister herself).

Apart from the Policy Unit material, we should have all of the rest in by the end of January 1991. But in commissioning it we must make it clear in public that the timetable does



not imply an early Election. It simply represents our desire to have a rich source of ideas from many quarters before finalising our positions. If we stick to that line in public we can at least reduce election fever. But if we do not move until, say, after the Party Conference we effectively rule out a June election next year and will quickly be seen to have done so: that does not seem wise.

Can we all agree on this, I wonder?

And if we can, can we try to bring both John Wakeham and Kenneth Baker on side? (Brian: you are the best person, I imagine, to make headway with Kenneth Baker: I shall try to influence John Wakeham by another route).

Would it be worth our having a short further discussion on all this?



ROBIN HARRIS