

July 1990.

SPEAKING NOTE FOR CABINET ON POLICY GROUPS

- I am today writing to all Cabinet Colleagues concerning the arrangements for the development of policy for our election manifesto
- I am inviting colleagues in charge of Departments to set up Policy Groups in the autumn to consider policies in their area with a view to their reporting early next year
- In particular, it is essential that the backbenches are fully involved in this process and I hope Colleagues will consult with the officers of their backbench committees about possible members. The Research Department will provide secretaries to the Groups
- Colleagues should let me have their ideas about membership of each Group as soon as possible after the House returns
- In due course, I shall be establishing a strategy group of senior Ministers to oversee this process
- I intend to inform the 1922 Committee of these arrangements when I speak to them later this afternoon and I am also arranging for the press to be briefed accordingly

POLICY GROUPS

Decision to set up policy groups in the autumn does not signal an early election.

It does signal that

- when it comes we will be prepared
- we value ideas and want to have the best to choose from
- we will think through our policies fully.

We all know where we want to go:

- towards wider share ownership - with every worker a capitalist
- wider home ownership - with still more people having a chance to own
- more choice and power for parents in schools
- stronger families: for family breakdown is at the root of homelessness, poverty and often crime

And all that within the framework of a strong free enterprise economy with inflation beaten and tax rates down.

We don't need groups to tell us about where we want to go: we want to hear views about how we are to get there.

We're always prepared to change the pace: we're never prepared to change direction.

That is what people expect of us - and what they will vote for.