

PRIME MINISTER

CABINET: Thursday 16th February 1984

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

1. This is the first item on the agenda. No official will be present. Michael Alison and I will be present.
2. The Chairman has not produced any paper.
3. I have prepared a short brief for you (attached) in three parts:
 - (a) The current position on preparation for the elections - Flag A
 - (b) Key points for the Cabinet discussion - Flag B
 - (c) Your engagements during the European elections - Flag C
4. I have shown this note to Michael Alison. No copy has been made.

Steve

STEPHEN SHERBOURNE

15th February 1984

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

A. THE CURRENT POSITION ON PREPARATION FOR THE ELECTIONS

- A1. The Information Campaign is now under way. This campaign is spending the money allotted to the Party by the European Parliament. It has a cut-off date of 14th April. Up to this date, the money^{is} being spent on leaflets, promotional activities, newspaper advertising (to start next month, I think) and the "European Handbook" (alias the "Campaign Guide" which has to go under another name to qualify for the money which is available for information, not electioneering; it is however remaining political in content).
- A2. There is one slight oddity about the expenditure of this money. It is being controlled by a committee under the chairmanship of Edward Kellett-Bowman (as the money strictly goes to the EDG); and because he has not been given any clear guidance on campaign themes, the message during this information campaign, up to April 14th, is in effect being determined by Edward Kellett-Bowman and Saatchi's together.
- A3. After April 14th the Party will be spending its own money, in whatever way it chooses. But shortage of finance will prevent an advertising campaign. This may well arouse criticism from colleagues, or in time from the Party, because evidence suggests that any effect of the pre-April 14th campaign will be lost by June 14th.
- A4. The first draft of the Manifesto is expected to go forward to the committee chaired by Geoffrey Howe on 23rd February. This has been drafted by Adam Ridley, John Houston (Geoffrey Howe's special adviser) and one or two others. It has gone through the Rifkind sub-committee on its way to Geoffrey Howe.

E.R.

A5. A Draft Organisation Strategy Paper for the campaign has been produced, which deals fairly comprehensively with organisational issues. I think, however, there is one gap - on co-ordination between Party and Government which is more difficult when the Government is working at its normal pace. There may be a role here for special advisers but it will need to be carefully thought out.

A6. There is one other gap. Despite your request to Geoffrey Howe for a "clear and co-ordinated campaign strategy" - (your letter to Geoffrey Howe dated 18th January, sent to help him put pressure on the Chairman) - no such co-ordinated strategy has been formulated. Of course, much will depend on the outcome of the March summit. But there will be some basic themes we want to develop, whatever the outcome of the summit. Insufficient thought has been given to what these should be, how they should be deployed and the line we take with the Opposition parties. The result is that so far the information campaign, the preparation of the Manifesto and the organisation strategy are all being developed independent of one another.

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

B KEY POINTS FOR THE CABINET DISCUSSION

- B1. The need for a co-ordinated campaign strategy (see para A6 above); and to identify a few clear priorities.
- B2. The need to use the time from now on:
- (a) to develop our case
 - (b) to undermine the position of the other parties (should officials in Departments be asked to analyse the Opposition's policies, and cost them, as happened during the General Election?)
- B3. The need for Ministers to keep the election in mind when running departments.
- B4. Are there any policy announcements which could be made during the campaign to breathe more life into it.
- B5. The need to win a commitment from Ministers for their time during the campaign (though, as this has been left till fairly late in the day, Ministers' diaries are already heavily committed by their departments).

C PRIME MINISTER'S ENGAGEMENTS FOR THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

Friday 18th May? (Question mark now over this date because Saturday's papers are slight)

am Launch European Manifesto CCO

pm Speak to European candidates

Wednesday 23rd May

Conservative Women's Conference Barbican

(Monday 28th May to Friday 1st June: Whitsun Recess)

Wednesday 30th May

Visit to Banbury Banbury
(Sir Henry Plumb)

Monday 4th June (House returns)

early Press Conference for European CCO
am Election

(Possible visit to Euro-constituency)

Wednesday 6th June

Visit to Normandy
40th anniversary of D-day

Monday 11th June

early Record Party Political Broadcast
am for Tuesday 12th June.

Wednesday 13th June

early Final Press Conference for European CCO
am Election

Sub

c. (LPO)
HO
LEO
HMT
FCO
DES
NIO
MOD

DTI
DTI
WO
SO
DEW.
MAFF
DHSS
CS-HMT

LPS
DEP.
DEP.
COL
CO
DEP (Chairman)
CWO



10 DOWNING STREET

10 February 1984

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

There will be a discussion of the European Elections before Cabinet on Thursday, 16 February. The Prime Minister would be grateful if all Cabinet Ministers, plus the Chief Whip and the Chairman of the Party, could attend at 0945 in the Cabinet Room. Officials will not be present for this discussion, which will be followed by a meeting of the Cabinet.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Private Secretaries to all Cabinet Ministers, to Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and to Emma Oxford in the Chairman's Office. A copy also goes for information to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

STEPHEN SHERBOURNE

Miss Janet Lewis-Jones,
Lord President's Office.

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