

CONFIDENTIAL

CCPY NO. 1....

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

56TH MEETING

5.00 p.m., Wednesday 9th April 1975

in the Leader's Room at the House of Commons

AGENDA

1. Minutes of 55th Meeting - attached.
2. Future business.
3. Any other business.

Conservative Research Department,  
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CFP/SMW  
3.4.75

# Conservative Research Department

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## MRS. THATCHER

1. Tonight's Shadow Cabinet Meeting. As you know, since the original agenda was circulated both Sir Geoffrey Howe and Terence Higgins have asked if they can raise matters. Two notes have been circulated; one on VAT and the Arts which Sir Geoffrey Howe should introduce, and one on Insurance Industry Legislation which Terence Higgins should introduce. I imagine that the former might take up more time than the latter.

The only apology that I have received so far for this evening's meeting is Lord Thorneycroft who, as you know, will be away until 21st April.

I understand that Sir Keith has spoken to Caroline Stephens and suggested that you might ask colleagues tonight if they could indicate to her (i.e. Caroline Stephens) by 6 p.m. tomorrow evening whether they had any reservations about his paper for Friday's meeting. I do not quite follow this. It is a very extensive paper and it would be surprising if there were not quite a lot of other views and emphases. But perhaps Sir Keith can say a word tonight himself.

2. Friday's Meeting. As you know Sir Keith's paper has been circulated and we are circulating the note which you asked me to prepare on the Political Situation and Future Tactics this afternoon. Adam Ridley's note on the Budget will also be circulated today. I do not know whether you want a Chairman's Note

...../for Friday.

for Friday. Obviously it is difficult to do one in any structured form since given the items on the agenda and also the purpose of the discussion it is bound to travel a long way in all directions. However I did think that it might be helpful to ~~drop~~<sup>put</sup> one or two thoughts on paper for you and I will send this note to you ~~later~~-tomorrow.

I hope it will be all right if on Friday we have one or two more observers than at normal Shadow Cabinet meetings. I would like to bring, as well as Adam Ridley, James Douglas and David Nicholson (or another of the Section Heads) to supervise the minutes. I very much want James to help Sir Keith with the organisation of the policy exercise; as you know James has been round this course before and knows a lot of the jockeys and most of the fences. His academic contacts and academic input are much better than mine. Once the whole thing is operating we could then shift someone like Nigel Forman into this seat. I hope that it will be all right if I leave early on Friday afternoon, not long after lunch. I have a very long standing domestic engagement in Yorkshire and I have to be up there by about 6.30 p.m. Adam will be there anyway for the whole of the Budget discussion.

3. Europe. I think you know that we are trying to produce in the next fortnight a short Campaign Guide setting out the Conservatives' case for staying in Europe. I hope that this will be available - it will be available! - on 30th April. I think that this document might be quite important since my hunch is that most of the ammunition in the referendum campaign as well as most of the infantry are going to have to be provided by us.



CHRIS PATTEN

9th April, 1975