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Memorandum from: A.S. Garner
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To: Members of the Management Committee

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PARLIAMENTARY REDISTRIBUTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

At the last meeting of the Management Committee, the Chairman asked me to prepare a paper on the selection of candidates and the problems arising because of parliamentary redistribution.

In connection with this, I have now prepared a brief on the whole question of redistribution including the adoption of candidates and I attach:

1. A paper outlining the general problems of redistribution including the timing of reorganisation, the effect on constituency associations and the suggested lines of reorganisation where necessary, the selection of candidates and miscellaneous items such as by-elections, local government elections, etc.
2. A schedule showing action to be taken on various aspects connected with constituency reorganisation.
3. A report on the progress of the Boundary Commission for England to date and some of the implications.

The Boundary Commission for Scotland has to date produced reports on three of the nine Regions and I believe that they hope to complete their reports by July of this year. These will include the nine Regions plus the two island Regions.

The position in Wales is much less satisfactory in that the Boundary Commission cannot start work until the local government boundaries have been reviewed and currently these are only at the Community Council stage. It may well be that in the end the Boundary Commission will have to proceed on the existing Districts and it seems unlikely that their final report will be produced until near the deadline of summer 1984.

In the paper I have, as you will see, produced a formula which can enable constituency associations anyway faced with only minor change to go ahead with the selection of candidates before Parliament approves the final plans. It is much more difficult

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where major change is concerned to proceed in this way but at least if we proceed where minor change is concerned it will give us a number of candidates particularly in the tougher areas who could be our spokesmen well in advance of general redistribution.

The Chairman has asked me to circulate this paper to members of the Management Committee in order that it can be discussed at tomorrow's meeting.

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REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS

PROBLEMS OF RE-ORGANISATION

1. PROCEDURE

- (a) The Boundary Commissions are required by section 2 of the House of Commons (Redistribution of Seats) Act, 1949 (as amended), to prepare, not later than early 1984, a report embodying their proposals for a general redistribution. The Commissions are now in the process of reviewing parliamentary constituency boundaries.
- (b) The electoral quota is arrived at by dividing the electorate for each review area by the number of existing constituencies within each area. While the Commissions are required to recommend constituencies with electorates as nearly equal as practicable, the rules for redistribution permit a departure from the rules if special geographical considerations make this desirable. Moreover, the Commissions can depart from the rules to take into account other circumstances, e.g. if changes would break local ties.
- (c) Representations in respect of a Commission's provisional recommendations may be lodged within one month of their local publication. Under the Act of 1958, a Commission cannot proceed with their final recommendations if representations are made to them by an interested local authority, or by a body of electors numbered at least 100, until a local enquiry has been held. If a Commission decides to alter their recommendations, as a result of a local enquiry, the revised recommendations must also be published. But a further enquiry is not obligatory.
- (d) The Secretary of State must lay the Commission's reports before Parliament, but he may modify the recommendations. With the report he submits an Order or Orders in Council giving effect to the recommendations (with or without modifications). This has to be approved by both Houses of Parliament, and until this stage is reached there can be no finality regarding boundaries.
- (e) When the Orders have been approved by Her Majesty in Council, the redistribution takes effect at the next general election. Until then all by-elections are fought on the existing boundaries.
- (f) It is not known when the Boundary Commissions will produce their final reports. In the case of England and Scotland these are unlikely to be published before 1982 and in the case of Wales it may be later. It must be remembered that a general election will take place on the present boundaries if it occurs before the Orders in Council have been signed. Therefore we must not compromise our present Associations until it is clear that the next general election will be fought on the new boundaries.

2. TIMING OF REORGANISATION

The timing of any action required as a result of redistribution is of great importance. Premature reorganisation should be avoided, as it may necessitate the difficult process of "unscrambling". On the other hand, discussions should take place and plans be drawn up to deal with cases where it is believed that either no or only minor objections have been raised to the Boundary Commission's proposals or revised proposals. Such preparations will enable the final transition to the new boundaries to take place promptly and smoothly directly after the Orders in Council have been finally approved. It is vital that Associations are not re-organised in line with the proposed new boundaries until it is certain that the next general election will be fought on the new boundaries.

3. EFFECT OF REDISTRIBUTION ON EXISTING CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS

- (a) Redistribution may affect a constituency in various ways, and the consequent action to be taken will largely depend on the degree to which its previous area, character and electorate have been altered. Existing constituencies may be broadly classified under one of the following headings:
 - (i) Unaffected: No change in boundaries, name or representation.
 - (ii) Change of name only: or change of status (i.e. from county constituency to borough constituency). No alteration in boundaries.
 - (iii) Minor alterations to boundaries: with or without a change of name or status.
 - (iv) Major alterations to boundaries: with or without a change of name or status, but where the existing Association survives.
 - (v) Existing Association eliminated altogether owing to a reduction in the representation of the county, metropolitan district or Greater London borough, or where changes in boundaries or representation require the creation of a new Association.
- (b) The question as to what constitutes "minor alterations" must be determined in the light of local conditions, but it is suggested that constituencies which have not lost or gained more than 20% of their previous electorate should place themselves in this category.
- (c) Where major alterations to boundaries take place, in general an existing Association should survive as an organised body and form the nucleus of the new Association if it can be clearly identified with one of the new constituencies created by redistribution. It might be said to be "clearly identified", for example, if:
 - (i) it is more nearly coterminous with the new constituency than any other existing Association, and

(ii) it already administers more than 50% of the electorate of the new constituency.

(d) If the above conditions are not fulfilled, it might prove impossible not to wind up an Association. In that case it is recommended that, at the appropriate moment and not before, the Association should be dissolved, and a new one formed from elements of all the Associations which previously included parts of the new constituency in their territory. It should, however, be borne in mind that if an Association is dissolved its property might be considered to have changed hands, giving rise to liability for Corporation Tax on the value of Association property or other taxable assets. This danger can be avoided by an existing Association not being wound up, but amending its rules as necessary to take account of changes in the composition of the constituency.

4. ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY EXISTING ASSOCIATIONS ON REDISTRIBUTION TAKING EFFECT

A schedule outlining the action which should be taken by existing Associations is attached as Appendix "A". The action to be taken under each subject heading is tabulated according to the degree to which the constituency is affected by redistribution. It does not profess to meet every contingency, nor will it invariably suit local conditions. It is merely intended as a guide and full use should, therefore, be made of the services of the Central Office Agent for the Area when these problems are being considered.

5. FORMATION OF ASSOCIATIONS IN NEW CONSTITUENCIES

(a) The responsibility of forming an Association in a new constituency created by redistribution will normally rest with the Chairman of the Association which previously served the greatest proportion of the electorate in the new constituency. The Chairman of other Associations which previously administered a part of the new constituency should be consulted, and the Central Office Agent for the Area should take the initiative in bringing the parties together.

(b) The new Association should be built as far as possible on the framework of existing branches which previously belonged to other constituencies, and the officers of these branches should be invited to collaborate in making the arrangements for the establishment of the new Association.

(c) All persons within the boundaries of the new constituency who are known to have been members of Conservative Associations should be invited to a general meeting. The machinery of existing branches should be used for this purpose and the details of the meeting should be advertised in the local press for two or three weeks previously. A resolution should be passed, bringing the new Association into being, and a provisional committee should be set up to draft rules* and to conduct negotiations with each of the Associations which previously covered the whole or part of the territory of the new constituency.

* The Model Rules published by Central Office in the Organisation Series should be consulted. Handbook No.3.

- (d) A further general meeting will be required to approve the rules, to elect officers, executive council and the necessary committees, to appoint an agent and to set in motion the procedure for adopting a prospective candidate.
- (e) Application should be made, accompanied by a copy of the rules, for the new Association to be affiliated to the National Union.
- (f) Where a present constituency is divided to form two or more constituencies, it is strongly urged that a qualified agent should be appointed in each constituency.

6. SELECTION OF PROSPECTIVE PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES

- (a) In normal circumstances constituency Associations without a Conservative M.P. aim to select their prospective candidates about three years in advance of a likely general election in order to give them adequate time to nurse the constituency. However, redistribution and the possibility of changes in boundaries must be taken into account this time. The Model Rules, based upon recommendations agreed by the National Union, state that:

"Should the parliamentary boundaries of the constituency be subject to redistribution, then the sitting Member of Parliament shall have the right to submit himself for selection for any constituency which may incorporate any part of his old constituency notwithstanding that there may be a Member of Parliament for another part of the constituency, or for any other constituency where a vacancy is notified."

Likely changes in constituency boundaries, particularly where major changes are envisaged, present special problems so far as the timing and method of selection of prospective candidates are concerned. It is recognised that where practical some constituency Associations will wish to proceed with the selection of a candidate after the Boundary Commission's proposals appear to have general agreement locally but before they have been approved by Parliament. The following guidelines are, therefore, suggested in such cases:

- (i) Minor alterations to boundaries where no Conservative Member of Parliament is affected

When appropriate the existing Association may proceed with the selection of a prospective candidate in accordance with their rules, but they should consult and involve the areas likely to be taken in eventually as a result of redistribution.

- (ii) Minor alterations to boundaries where a Conservative Member of Parliament is affected

When appropriate the existing Association may proceed with the selection of a prospective candidate in accordance with their rules only after they have consulted fully with and have the agreement of the Member/s of Parliament concerned and have consulted and involved the areas likely to be taken in eventually as a result of redistribution (see quote from Model Rules above).

(iii) Major alterations to boundaries

The difficulties involved in adopting and servicing a prospective candidate for a proposed constituency where large sections of two or more existing constituencies are involved are considerable - as is nursing such a constituency by the candidate. In general, it is recommended that in cases of major change the selection procedure should be delayed until Parliament has approved the new proposals and the Association has been re-formed.

In some cases where the proposed changes in boundaries seem to have general agreement and where it seems unlikely that they will be altered either by the Commission or Parliament, and where the proposed changes would result in a major part of an existing Association forming the basis of a new one, it may be thought desirable to proceed as in (i) above. However, this should only be contemplated where there is general agreement by all parties concerned, including any Conservative M.P. who may be affected.

- (b) Central Office Agents will be glad to help and advise in any way and should be consulted before any steps are taken regarding the selection of a prospective candidate.

7. BY-ELECTIONS

- (a) By-elections occurring before the next general election will be fought on the constituency boundaries which existed before redistribution. The Association covering the old boundaries may have been disbanded or had its territory and membership divided up amongst two or more Associations. In such cases the adoption of a candidate should be approved by an ad hoc meeting of those members of the various Associations concerned, who reside within the old constituency boundaries.
- (b) Each of the Associations concerned should endeavour to raise their share of the election expenses and to put the maximum effort in their own part of the old constituency.
- (c) If circumstances permit, it would obviously be an advantage for the candidate to appoint the agent for the old Association as his election agent.

8. LOCAL ELECTIONS

- (a) The 1981 Greater London Council elections will be fought on the existing constituency boundaries.
- (b) After redistribution has been implemented local elections may arise where the boundaries of local authorities overlap two or more parliamentary constituencies. In such circumstances careful co-ordination will be required between the constituency and branch associations concerned.

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9. AREAS AND BRANCHES CHANGING HANDS

- (a) The constituency organisation must be kept in a state of high efficiency in readiness for a general election at all times, and this over-riding consideration must outweigh local loyalties and affiliations. Activity should be intensified between now and the date of handing over. A membership drive should take place, subscriptions should be kept up to date, committees strengthened, and fund raising capability built up.
- (b) It cannot be too strongly emphasised that areas and branches which are liable to be transferred to new constituencies remain the responsibility of existing Associations and owe their full allegiance to their respective Associations until the date when the agreed scheme of re-organisation comes into operation.
- (c) Immediately before the change-over, members should be thanked for their past support and urged to continue their subscriptions and their work in their new constituency.
- (d) At the same time, it is suggested that Members of Parliament should send a letter to voters who are being transferred to another constituency, explaining why the change is taking place, and expressing regret at losing them as constituents. Special literature distributions should be made in such areas by the receiving Association.
- (e) Finally, there must be "give and take" in negotiations between Associations. It is particularly important that where new Associations have to be created they should be given as generous a deal as possible.

A.S. Garner

A.S. GARNER
Director of Organisation.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS

(WHEN APPROPRIATE)

1 SUBJECT ON WHICH ACTION IS TO BE TAKEN	2 WHERE CHANGE OF NAME IS INVOLVED	3 MINOR ALTERATIONS TO BOUNDARIES	4 MAJOR ALTERATIONS TO BOUNDARIES WHERE EXISTING ASSOCIATION SURVIVES AS THE NUCLEUS OF THE NEW ASSOCIATION	5 WHERE ASSOCIATION IS ELIMINATED OR LOSES ITS IDENTITY
<p>1. Member of Parliament</p> <p>2. Selection of Prospective Candidate</p> <p>3. Officers of the Association</p> <p>4. Executive council and other representative bodies</p>		<p>Adoption or re-adoption procedure normally to begin after new boundaries have been agreed by Parliament and Association re-organised to take in new areas. Any Conservative MPs affected will have right to apply (see Model Rules 22(2)(f)).</p> <p>When appropriate existing Associations may proceed with selection - but after full consultation and agreement with all concerned (see section 6(1) or (ii) of accompanying notes).</p> <p>Existing officers should remain in office until the next annual meeting.</p> <p>Existing bodies continue, but proportionate representation should be given to new territory brought into the constituency.</p>	<p>As in column 3 BUT In some cases where there seems to be general agreement on likely new boundaries procedure may be advanced providing all are agreed - including any Conservative MPs concerned.</p> <p>When appropriate Associations may proceed (see Section 6(iii) of accompanying notes).</p> <p>Newly constituted executive council should decide when fresh elections should take place for all officers.</p> <p>New executive council and other representative bodies should be elected.</p>	<p>MP has right to apply for any constituency incorporating any part of his/her old constituency - notwithstanding that there may be an MP for another part of the constituency (see Model Rules 22(2)(f)). MP should keep in touch with Central Office regarding his future plans.</p> <p>Officers relinquish office on winding up, but it is hoped that they will offer their services to the new constituency in which they find themselves.</p> <p>All committees are dissolved with effect from the passing of the resolution winding-up the association. Members should be urged to continue active work in their new constituencies.</p>

1	2	3	4	5
5. Branch associations		Branches which have to be transferred to another constituency should as far as possible retain their identity and corporate status, and go over to the new association as a complete working unit.	As in column 3	As in column 3
6. Young Conservatives	Amend title as necessary.	Action in accordance with principles laid down for constituency associations.	As in column 3	As in column 3.
7. Representation on area and central organisation of the Party.		Existing representation should continue until the next annual meeting.	Newly constituted executive council to determine whether fresh elections are necessary.	Membership lapses with effect from winding-up, and the association for any newly created constituency should apply for affiliation to the National Union as soon as its rules have been adopted.
8. Rules of association	Amend as necessary.	Amend as necessary.	Rules should be amended as required and re-adopted by the newly constituted association.	The association for a new constituency should seek the advice of the C.O. Agent when drafting its rules.
9. Branch rules	Amend as necessary.	Amend as necessary. Rules of new branches to be brought into line with those of parent association.	Rules of new branches to be brought into line with revised rules of parent association.	Branches transferred to newly constituted association should modify their rules to conform with those of the parent association.

1	2	3	4	5
10. Association funds and election funds.	Amend instructions to bank where necessary.	The question of whether the association should hand over a proportion of its liquid assets is one for negotiation with the other associations concerned. If it is throwing off territory to an entirely new association it is desirable that it should make a contribution to its funds.	A proportion of the liquid assets, preferably based on the number of electors, should be handed over to the association or associations which are taking over parts of the territory. In case of dispute, Area should be consulted.	A notice to creditors should be inserted in the local press. Accounts should be audited, and the assets of the association on winding-up should be divided among the associations absorbing its territory, in approximate proportion to electorate. The advice of the C.O. Agent should be sought.
11. Branch funds.	As above.	Branches which are transferred to another association should normally take their funds with them.	As in column 3.	Branches which find themselves in a newly constituted association should contribute as generously as possible to their new parent association.
12. Trust funds.	Legal advice should be taken as to what action is necessary.	As in column 2.	As in column 2.	As in column 2.
13. Constituency quotas.		Existing quota will remain until renegotiated.	The quota should, if possible, be paid before reorganisation takes effect. Failing this, the amount payable should be agreed with the area treasurer.	It is hoped that the quota will have been paid before this stage is reached. In this case, due credit will be given to the new associations concerned.
14. Subscribers.		Lists of subscribers residing in territory which is handed over to another constituency should be passed to the association concerned indicating whether or not they have paid for the current year.	As in column 3.	As in column 3.

1	2	3	4	5
14. Subscribers (continued)		<p>Each should receive a letter from the old association thanking them for past support, and urging them to support the new association.</p> <p>Associations should <u>NOT</u> appeal for subscriptions to residents in new territory which they expect to acquire on redistribution until the scheme of reorganisation has become operative.</p>		
15. Registers and records.	Necessary amendments to be made to records.	Register of electors, details regarding postal votes, and all records connected with the organisation in territory which is taken over by another constituency should be handed over to the association concerned.	As in column 3.	As in column 3.
16. Contracts of service.	Amend as necessary.	Confirm by resolution that existing contracts continue.	Newly constituted executive council should confirm the renewal of contract with agent, organiser, clerk, etc.	Due notice should be given to terminate existing contracts and particulars of certificated agents and organisers who will be displaced should be sent at the earliest opportunity to the C.O. Agent for the area.
17. Other contracts,	Amend by agreement with the parties concerned.	Amend, where necessary by agreement, with the parties concerned.	As in column 3. It may be convenient to assign certain contracts to other associations. Legal advice should be taken in doubtful or complicated cases.	Notice should be given to terminate in accordance with the terms of the contract. Possibility of assigning contracts should be discussed with other associations concerned. Legal advice is desirable in difficult cases.

PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

	No. of Recommended Constits.	Unchanged	Major Changes	No. of Cons. MPs Affected By Major Changes	Minor Changes	No. of Cons. MPs Affected By Minor Changes
G. London (31 Boros)	81	16	17	9	48 (17 Soc)	31
Notts.	11	1	6	2	4 (2 Soc)	2
Derbys	10	--	7	3	3 (2 Soc)	1
Cleveland	6	2	4	1	--	--
Somerset	5	2	3	4	--	--
Lancs	16	2	11	9	3 (1 Soc)	2
Cheshire	10	--	9	7	1 (No Soc)	1
Northumb.	4	--	4	1	--	--
Essex	16	2	9	6	5 (1 Soc)	4
Herts.	10	--	8	7	2 (No Soc)	2
Salop	4	--	2	4	2 (No Soc)	4
Staffs	11	1	3	3	7 (5 Soc)	5
Kent	16	3	7	6	6 (No Soc)	6
Surrey	11	3	4	4	4 (No Soc)	4
TOTALS	211	32	94	66	85 (28 Soc)	62

Note: The above are the recommendations made in respect of 13 out of 39 non-metropolitan counties and 31 out of 32 Greater London Boroughs. There are also 6 metropolitan counties for which no recommendations have been made to date.