

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

150TH MEETING

5.00 p.m., Wednesday, 9th February 1977, in the  
Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

REVISED AGENDA

1. Future business.
2. Forthcoming events.
3. Bullock - a paper by Mr. Nott, LCC(77)152  
- previously circulated.
4. Referenda - a paper by Mr. Pym, LCC(77)154 ✓  
- attached.
5. The Earnings Rule - a paper by Mr. Jenkin,  
LCC(77)153 - attached.
6. Any other business.

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 150th Meeting held at 5.00 p.m.,  
Wednesday, 9th February 1977, in the Leader's Room  
at the House of Commons.

Present: Mrs. Thatcher (in the Chair)

Mr. Whitelaw, Sir Keith Joseph,  
Lord Hailsham, Sir Geoffrey Howe,  
Mr. Prior, Mr. Pym, Mr. Gilmaur,  
Mr. Peyton, Mr. Jenkin, Mr. Davies,  
Mr. St. John Stevas, Mr. Haseltine,  
Mr. Maude, Mr. Edwards, Mrs. Oppenheim,  
Mr. Biffen, Mr. King, Mr. Nott,  
Mr. Taylor, Lord Thorneycroft.

Mr. Atkins.

In attendance: Lord Ferrers, Sir Michael Havers,  
Mr. Fowler, Mr. Brittan, Mr. Butler,  
Mr. Stanley, Mr. Patten, Mr. Hooson,  
Mr. Nicholson.

Apologies: Lord Carrington, Mr. Neave.

1. Future Business for the Week 14th-21st February

On Monday, 14th February, there would be the Second Reading of the Job Release Bill (Mr. Madel, Mr. Silvester). This would be followed by the Remaining Stages of the Social Security (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (Mr. Jenkin, Mrs. Chalker).

On Tuesday, 15th February, Mr. A. Steen would seek leave to introduce his Protection of Voluntary Work Bill under the 10 Minute Rule. This would be followed by further proceedings on the Scotland and Wales Bill (Mr. Pym and team).

On Wednesday, 16th February, Mr. T. Litterick would seek leave to introduce his Freedom of Information and Privacy Bill under the 10 Minute Rule. This would be followed by further proceedings on the Scotland and Wales Bill (Mr. Pym and team).

On Thursday, 17th February, there would be a Supply Day with subjects to be decided. This would be followed by a Motion on the British Railways Board (Increase of Compensation Limit) Order (Mr. Fowler).

On Friday, 18th February, there would be the Second Readings of the following Private Members' Bills: Mr. S. Ross's Housing (Homeless Persons) Bill, and those of Mr. T. Bradley, Mr. G. Younger, Mrs. J. Butler and Mr. L. Pavitt.

On Monday, 21st February, there would be the Remaining Stages of the Covent Garden Market (Financial Provisions) Bill (Mr. Jopling, Mr. Finsberg). This would be followed by a Debate on EEC Documents S/1882/76 and S/12/77 on Textiles (Mr. Nott).

2. Subject for the Supply Day

There was a discussion and the following points were agreed:

(i) We would devote half the Supply Day on 17th February to debating educational standards, and the second half to debating unemployment in the South West. We would vote at the end of both these debates.

(ii) It was desirable to debate housing, and also unemployment in the West Midlands nearer the time of the by-election in Stechford, and to debate unemployment in Greater London nearer the time of the GLC elections.

(iii) We would consider debating direct elections to the European Parliament on a Supply Day if, after an appropriate period, it was clear that the Government was not willing to introduce and carry the necessary legislation this Session.

3. Matters Arising on the Scotland and Wales Bill

Mr. Pym introduced his paper "Referendum", LCC (77) 154. There was a discussion and the following points were agreed:

(i) We favoured only one question in the proposed referendum, viz. whether the people of Scotland and Wales wanted assemblies as proposed by the Government.

(ii) If there were affirmative replies to these referenda, the results would be considered consultative and Parliament would then be asked to vote to implement the legislation. If the results were negative this would be regarded as mandatory on Parliament.

(iii) The only practicable qualification for voting in the referenda was residence in Scotland and Wales. There was no feasible way of including those with Scottish and Welsh ancestry or connections who were resident in England.

(iv) We should put down amendments for rephrasing the questions in the referenda, on the lines suggested in Mr. Pym's paper. We would vote on a three line whip for such amendments, but there would otherwise be a one line whip for proceedings on the Scotland and Wales Bill on the 15th and 16th February.

4. Foreign Affairs

Mr. Davies reported on Rhodesia. It was noted that he was to visit the new American Secretary of State and that he would obtain Lord Carrington's report on his visit to Southern Africa by telephone before seeing Mr. Vance. It was agreed that we should press for a general debate on foreign affairs and indicate our dissatisfaction with the Government's performance over Rhodesia and other matters and its attitude to direct elections to the European Parliament. Members visiting Washington for any purpose were requested to make contact with as many members of the new Administration as possible.

5. The Bullock Report

Mr. Nott introduced his paper "Bullock", LCC (77) 152. There was a discussion and it was agreed to redraft the paper to take account of the following points:

(i) In the first paragraph it was desirable to insert the idea that, if management were unable to sit on a company's board by virtue of their managerial role alone, their power to take initiatives in the administration of the company would be restricted. It was also desirable to refer to the view that the Bullock proposals would amount to expropriation without compensation of certain shareholders' rights.

(ii) We should criticise the proposal to appoint members of the board through trade unions: a more directly democratic process of election was obviously preferable.

(iii) We should not lose sight of the very different legal system in Germany, involving a number of obligations and duties on both unions and on employee directors.

(iv) A useful parallel with a company's board reconstructed, as proposed by Bullock, would be the National Dock Labour Board.

(v) In paragraph 3, line 3, an attempt would be made to find a more appropriate word than "direction".

(vi) With regard to paragraph 4, we should ask the Government as many questions as we could about their proposals.

(vii) Paragraph 5 would be amended to state that we recommended positive action by companies to provide for greater participation by their workforce, that we would like to see helpful examples of consultation with employees published, and that we should encourage company chairmen to state in their company reports how they were consulting their employees.

(viii) Certain members disagreed with the proposal in paragraph 6.

#### 6. The Earnings Rule

Mr. Jenkin introduced his paper on the Earnings Rule, LOC (77) 153. There was a discussion and it was agreed to make a decision in the light of views expressed in the Business Committee.

The meeting closed at 6.15. p.m.