

A.S. Garner

The Chairman
c.c. Mr. Spicer
Mr. Gow
Mr. Lawson

2nd December 1982

TIMING FOR A POSSIBLE GENERAL ELECTION

We discussed this at our last meeting and in connection with this I now attach:

1. A record kept by Stuart Newman showing the dates of the announcement of the election for general elections from 1950. As you will see, this varies from 44 days to as little as 21 days in February 1974.
2. A paper showing the timetable provided for in the current Act. As you will see, this provides for the Proclamation to be issued on D-22.

This means that the announcement of the election could not be less than 22 days before polling day because of the need for the Royal Proclamation on that day but it could, of course, be as long in advance of the date of Proclamation as one thought wise.

There are obvious advantages for all parties including ours in having a little more notice before the actual date of Proclamation otherwise one would either not have produced the manifesto in time or one would have had to have produced it in advance in anticipation of a possible announcement.

AG

<u>General Election</u>	<u>Date of Announcement</u>	<u>Polling Day</u>	<u>Time Between Announcement & Polling Day</u> Days	<u>Overall Majority</u>
1. 1950	Jan 10	Feb 23	44	(5 Soc.)
2. 1951	Sep 19	Oct 25	36	(17 Con.)
3. 1955	Apl 15	May 26	41	(58 Con.)
4. 1959	Sep 9	Oct 8	29	(100 Con.)
5. 1964	Sep 14	Oct 15	31	(4 Soc.)
6. 1966	Feb 28	Mar 31	32	(96 Soc.)
7. 1970	May 18	Jun 18	31	(30 Con.)
8. 1974 (Feb)	Feb 7	Feb 28	21	(Nil Soc.)
9. 1974 (Oct)	Sep 18	Oct 10	22	(3 Soc.)
10. 1979	Mar 29	May 3	36	(43 Con.)

1979 May General Election

1. 29th March Announcement at 3.00 p.m.
2. 7th April Parliament dissolved
3. 3rd May Polling Day
4. 9th May Swearing in
5. 15th May State Opening of Parliament

Result

CONSERVATIVE	...	339
SOCIALIST	...	268
LIBERAL	...	11
SNP	...	2
PLAID CYMRU	...	2
OUP	...	5
DUP	...	3
UU	...	1
UUUP	...	1
SDLP	...	1
IND (Ulster)	...	1
Speaker	...	1
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		635

Conservative overall majority 43

SRN

PROPOSED GENERAL ELECTION TIMETABLE (RP Bill 1981)

Note: Dies non ignored in D- numbering

	<u>Proposed Timetable</u>	<u>Present Timetable</u>
Wed	D-22	Royal Proclamation
Thur	D-21	Receipt of Writ
Fri	D-20	Royal Proclamation
Sat	D-19	Receipt of Writ
Sun	D-18	Dies Non
Mon	D-17	Notice of Election
Tues	D-16	Notice of Election
Wed	D-15	
Thur	D-14	Last Day: Absent Voting Applications
Fri	D-13	
Sat	D-12	Dies Non
Sun	D-11	Dies Non
Mon	D-10	Last Day: Nominations
Tues	D- 9	
Wed	D- 8	
Thur	D- 7	
Fri	D- 6	
Sat	D- 5	Dies Non
Sun	D- 4	Dies Non
Mon	D- 3	
Tues	D- 2	
Wed	D- 1	
Thur		Polling Day