Daily Notes

Tuesday 7th June 1983

Final Issue

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

This is the last edition of Daily Notes. With it I send my best wishes to our candidates and my heartfelt thanks to all who are working so devotedly for a Conservative victory on June 9th.

A vote for the Conservatives is a vote for a continuation of the steady progress of the last four years in rebuilding our economy, widening ownership and giving people more choice.

A vote for Labour is a vote for the ruination of the economy by reckless over-spending, for State domination of all aspects of individual and commercial life, and for the weakening of our defences.

A vote for the Liberals or SDP could – as has happened before – help return a Labour Government.

Only a thumping majority for the Conservatives will remove the menace of a Socialist State in Britain.

Good luck to you all.

len

Parkman

Conservative Research Department



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1. SIX REASONS FOR VOTING CONSERVATIVE

Speaking in Birmingham on 3rd June, the **Prime Minister** gave six reasons for voting Conservative.

- * Because the Conservatives offer real hope of new jobs.
- * Because the Conservatives keep prices down.
- * Because the Conservatives reform trade union law.
- * Because the Conservatives give council tenants the chance to own their own home.
- * Because the Conservatives protect the social services.
- * Because the Conservatives ensure that this nation is properly defended.

There they are: six reasons for voting for the sort of Government that most people really want; the sort of Government that really does tackle the problems that are worrying people today.

Real Hope of New Jobs

The foremost of those problems, and the one that takes the longest time to cure, is unemployment. It is a problem which confronts virtually all the nations of the West. There are 26 million people out of work in the OECD countries. Every country in Western Europe and across the Atlantic has been hit by the recession.

We understand the problems, the human problems, the problems of dignity and self-respect. No government anywhere has shown more vigour and imagination in its efforts to help the unemployed. This Government has committed over £2,000 million this year in special measures to help the unemployed. Our special measures are helping more than one million men and women.

But alleviating the difficulties of the unemployed is not enough. We must offer real hope of genuine jobs and a real prospect of a sustained recovery.

Keeping Prices Down

Keeping prices down is the key to recovery. 'Inflation is the father and mother of increased unemployment', as a former Labour leader once told us.

It eats at savings; it destroys investment; it prices exports out of world markets. There could be no hope of a lasting return to fuller employment so long as inflation was allowed to rage unchecked.

Steady prices lead to steady jobs. We had to keep price rises down. And we have—to 4 per cent a year: the last time prices rose as slowly as that was fifteen years ago.

The choice at this election is clear as day. You can choose between low inflation with the Conservatives, high inflation with the Liberals and the SDP, and hyper-inflation with Labour.

Keeping Rates Down

Do you remember the time when your local Labour council used to slap in a supplementary rate demand because they'd run out of cash halfway through the year? Well, this Conservative government has outlawed supplementary rates.

As a result of our penalties and pressures on local government—if you leave out a handful of high-spending socialist councils—the average rate increase throughout the country this year was zero.

And in the next Parliament we're going to make sure that every rate payer is protected against unpredictable and unreasonable rate increases by high-spending councils. We're going to take reserve powers to impose a general limit for rate increases on all local authorities.

And we're going to abolish the wasteful, unnecessary Metropolitan Councils and return most of their functions to great cities like Birmingham.

Reform of the Trade Unions

We know from bitter experience how many customers were lost by irresponsible trade union power and how much damage was done to trade unionists themselves and their families, and to the nation as a whole.

Yet Labour would put the Trade Union leaders back in power. That's what their Manifesto says. 'At the heart of our programme is Labour's new partnership with the trade unions . . .' The men who encouraged the strikes, the men who defended the overmanning, the men who entrenched the restrictive practices—the men who brought Britain the Winter of Discontent—these are the men who would be partners in Government under Labour. 'Our starting point in government', they say, 'will be to discuss and agree with the Trade Unions a National Economic Assessment'. Not with Parliament, mind you, but with the Trade Unions. We Conservatives believe that governments should be accountable to Parliament—because only Parliament is elected by all the people.

We have seen too much of trade union power. We don't want union leaders to have so much control over our lives.

Home Ownership

The Labour Party fears choice and independence.

What happened when we gave council tenants the legal right to buy their own homes? The Labour Party fought those proposals tooth and nail. They are still fighting them today. This is what the Labour Party Manifesto says: 'Labour will end enforced council house sales'.

So if the local council says no to sales under a Labour Government, bang goes your right to buy. And if you've already bought your council house and want to sell, you would be compelled to offer your house back to the council.

Labour calls this policy 'A new deal' for council tenants. I call it a raw deal.

We are the only Party committed to give you an assured right to buy at an advantageous price.

Under the Conservative Government, half a million council houses were sold. Half a million families growing up as freeholders. How's that for freedom? In the next Parliament, we shall go full steam ahead. We want to double that half million to one million, at least, and then go on from there.

There are one million more home-owners today than there were only four years ago. For the first time, home-ownership in England and Wales has reached sixty per cent. Private housebuilding is now at its highest level for ten years. This is one of the greatest social advances ever recorded within the life of a single Parliament.

Protecting The Social Services

At the last Election, knowing the many demands for extra public spending, quite deliberately we chose our own priorities:

- * to improve standards in our schools;
- * to protect the pensioner;
- * to maintain the National Health Service;
- * and to uphold the defences of this country.

Those were the things we put first. And those are the things we have accomplished in the midst of the worst recession since the War. And we should be telling people what we've done.

Education. In our schools, the number of teachers per pupil has improved every year since we came to power, and is still improving. The amount of money spent per pupil has increased every year under the Conservatives, and is now at its highest ever level in real terms.

This Government cares about freedom of choice. We gave parents the right to choose. We gave them the right to sit on governing boards. We insisted that schools should publish prospectuses and that school inspectors should publish reports. And we gave back to local authorities the right to keep their grammar schools.

Pensions. We promised to protect the pensioner against rising prices. And we've done better than that. Did you know that under the Conservatives, the retirement pension has gone up by sixty eight per cent—seven per cent more than prices?

We promise to protect the pensioner against rising prices for the next Parliament too. And in future, when the pension is increased each year, it will be increased by the amount by which prices have actually risen—and not by the forecast of inflation, because those forecasts have been wrong in five out of the last seven years.

National Health Service. I make another pledge tonight. We will maintain the National Health Service in the future as we always have in the past.

Four years ago when we came to power, Britain was spending £7,750,000,000 on the National Health Service. This year, we're spending £15,500,000,000. That's more than double the amount spent by Labour. And even after you've allowed for rising prices, that's a real increase of seventeen per cent.

Did you know that there are:

- * 56,000 more nurses and midwives in Great Britain;
- * 7,000 more doctors and dentists;
- * 2 million more patients treated than under Labour.

These are the answers to Labour's silly scare that the Conservatives would dismantle the NHS.

I've said it before and I'll say it again, and I'll go on saying it until the message sinks in: 'I have no more intention of dismantling the National Health Service than I have of dismantling Britain's defences'.

The Defence of Britain

This Government has strengthened our defences. We have kept our NATO commitments. We shall continue to keep them.

We negotiate from strength to try to make disarmament on both sides a reality, both for nuclear and for conventional weapons.

At Williamsburg last weekend, the seven great industrial nations of the West stood together. We committed ourselves to pursue with impetus and urgency all the disarmament negotiations upon which we are now engaged: on strategic weapons; on the intermediate-range nuclear missiles; on chemical weapons; and on the reduction of forces in Central Europe.

Let me read to you the last paragraph of the statement which was agreed by every one of us:

"We commit ourselves to devote our full political resources to reducing the threat of war. We have a vision of the world in which the shadow of war has been lifted from all mankind, and we are determined to pursue that vision".

That is the unity which a Labour government would shatter. That is the vision which Labour's one-sided disarmament would destroy. That is the peace with which the Labour Party would gamble.

The Next Five Years

I have offered six reasons for voting Conservative. Six reasons why we believe that our programme represents the wishes and aspirations of the majority of people in this country. Six reasons why we must work every hour between now and polling day.

But there is one reason more. That is that this Government has the character to stick to this programme, and carry it through to success. There are no escape clauses; no small print in our policies. We say what we mean, and we mean what we say.

2. ONLY A WEEK

'The Labour Party has just one more week to avert disaster. When they have not been sniping at their own troops, many of Labour's leaders have appeared to be apologising for, rather than advocating, the policy of their party.'

(Tribune, 3rd June 1983)

3. THE COST OF UNEMPLOYMENT

The Fiction

Mr Foot:

'The cost of unemployment . . . is . . . now rising . . . to . . . £17 billion a year . . . They are the real figures given to the House of Commons by . . . (the) Treasury and confirmed by the all-party House of Lords Select Committee on Unemployment' (Yorkshire Post, 2nd June 1983).

Mr Steel:

At the Alliance Press Conference on 2nd June 1983, Mr Steel said that the Treasury and the House of Lords Select Committee put the 'cost of unemployment' at 'over £15 billion'.

The Fact

Treasury reply to the House of Lords Select Committee on Unemployment:

'The effect which higher unemployment has on the public finances depends so much on its causes that any single figure is bound to be misleading. In some cases the PSBR may even be reduced' (Cmnd. 8745, November 1982).

The Explanation

- (i) The total bill for social security benefits for the unemployed is about £5½ billion this year.
- (ii) Labour and the Alliance arrive at the figure of £17 billion by guessing that the Treasury 'loses' an additional £11½ billion in tax and National Insurance contributions not paid by those who are unemployed. This figure depends upon unverifiable assumptions about the amount that would be earned by those presently unemployed, if they had jobs.
- (iii) One major cause of unemployment has been excessively large increases in wages and salaries obtained by some of those in work. This has been unfair on the unemployed; but it has been good for the Exchequer, as higher wages yield higher taxes and higher National Insurance Contributions. Indeed, unemployment that is caused in this (or other ways) may bring the Exchequer more in increased taxation and NIC than it costs in extra benefits for the unemployed. That is why the Treasury says that the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement 'may even be reduced' by higher unemployment.

This does not, of course, mean that unemployment is a good thing: but it does mean that the figure given by Labour and the Alliance as the 'cost of unemployment' is wholly bogus.

4. LABOUR'S THREAT TO NATIONALISE TENANTED LAND

'A new Rural Land Authority will . . . begin to extend public ownership to tenanted land' (Labour Manifesto, p.16).

In Labour's Programme 1976, 'all land' was on the agenda for nationalisation. The new proposal, while seemingly less extreme than the 1976 one, is merely the thin end of the wedge, as **Lord Melchett**, a Minister in the last Labour Government, has made clear:

'It is a useful and significant first step in the process of nationalisation of land simply because . . . tenanted land would not need to be compensated for at the same level as land owned by owner-occupiers. It would help us on the way to nationalising all agricultural land, as the Labour Party is committed to' (Hansard, House of Lords, 2nd February 1983, Col. 844). The approximate acreage of tenanted land in England and Wales is 4.5 million hectares with a current value of some £2,500 per hectare; in Scotland it is 2.3 million hectares valued at about £1,500 per hectare. On this basis the ultimate cost to the Exchequer of Labour's present policy would be about £15 billion.

Nationalisation of all agricultural land was rejected by the Northfield Committee set up in 1977 by Mr John Silkin, then Labour's Minister of Agriculture, to look at land ownership. Their Report stated:

"... We firmly believe that the arguments put forward in favour of full nationalisation of agricultural land are academic, take little account of the practicalities of farm and land management and cannot be seen as an attempt to improve the performance of British agriculture. We conclude that there can only be political reasons for such a course of action. On agricultural grounds we reject proposals for the general nationalisation of agricultural land' (Cmnd. 7599).

An opinion poll carried out for the Country Landowners Association earlier this year found that seven out of every ten voters were opposed to Labour's plan to nationalise tenanted farm land. Sixty per cent of those questioned expected that the price of food would rise, and sixty-four per cent thought the countryside would be less well cared for under nationalisation.

A strong attack on Labour's policy is made in a recent paper British Farming: Under Threat of State Land Monopoly (April 1983) by Professor Donald Denman, Emeritus Professor of Land Economy at Cambridge University, probably the world's leading expert on land economy. He writes:

'If Labour are elected just under 40 per cent of all farm holdings and just over 40 per cent of all the farmed area of the country would be compulsorily taken over by the State. This would freeze the supply of new tenanted farms for new entrants to the industry. No owner could ever again offer his land to let.

'Control would be handed over to bureaucrats who would decide what a sound economic unit is and which applicants are best qualified and suited

to farm the land. This would mean that only tenants who were willing to comply with the farming prescriptions of the State and, for instance, accept trade union control of the farm, would be tolerated.

'Those efficient farmers, whose enterprises are more productive and profitable will have agricultural support withheld. Efficiency, good husbandry and profitability will be suppressed in the name of equality (it must be remembered that the Labour Party Common Market Safeguards Committee, membership of which includes Michael Foot, John Silkin, Tony Benn and Norman Buchan, supports this theory when it said "There is no particular merit in having an agricultural industry" 1982)'.

5. PUSSY-FOOT

From the official Labour Party Election Who's Who:

'Dowd, James Patrick. Candidate for Beckenham. Born 1951. Single. Has cat called Trotsky. . .'

6. CONSERVATIVES AND THE UNIONS

Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State of Employment speaking at a Press Conference on 3rd June, restated our determination to make the unions more democratic:

'This general election will be a vote of confidence in our programme for continuing union reform. As a matter of priority after the election, the new Conservative Government will introduce legislation designed to guarantee a greater measure of democracy in trade unions.

- We shall legislate for ballots for the governing bodies of trade unions. Frank Chapple has said this would be the single most important reform of the trade union movement.
- We shall legislate for union members to have a periodic review of their union's political fund. Decisions on unions' political funds could have been made as long ago as 70 years, before most union members were born. This reform is long overdue.
- We shall also curb the legal immunity of strikes called without the backing of a secret ballot. Opinion polls show that reform in this area has the overwhelming support of the people, with trade unionists being even keener on such measures than their non-union colleagues'.

7. MORE WISE WORDS FROM JO GRIMOND

When asked at the Alliance morning press conference on Thursday, 2nd June, whether he could comment on a new book by Mr Jo Grimond, entitled A Personal Manifesto (Martin Robertson of Oxford, May 1983). Mr Steel replied that he had not yet read the book. Had he been able to do so he might have drawn a few lessons from it . . .

On the fallacy behind spending money to create jobs

'Governments have constantly pumped the taxpayers money into projects which have low commercial value, if they have any at all. This is not investment. It may give temporary employment, but it produces no assets capable of yielding long-term wealth or indeed long-term employment'.

Fact: The Alliance proposes increases in public expenditure to create jobs.

On nationalised industries and privatisation

'Those nationalised industries which are profitable should be hived off. Where possible, they should be broken down into co-operatives of their own workers'.

Fact: The Alliance says it has no desire to change the frontiers between the public and private sectors.

On the Alliance proposal for a counter inflation tax

'Why should an employer be penalised? It is improbable that in most cases in which wages above the norm are paid, the fault will be his. The sanction would seem to me to be yet another whip laid across the back of the very people who are penalised at present and who ought to be encouraged'.

Fact: The Alliance would introduce a punitive tax on employers who give wage increases above a government-imposed norm.

On present unemployment

'In the aftermath of the locust years and in the face of a world slump I doubt if any government could have prevented a high level of unemployment even temporarily except at the cost of ruinous inflation'.

On education

'Mrs Williams is by no means the only member of the Alliance who would like to see State education extended at the expense of the private schools.'

On the Conservative Government

'I cannot say that I find the present Government to be composed of ferocious Right-wing radicals'.

Fact: The Alliance constantly attacks the Government for extremism.

On home ownership

'The Alliance should encourage house ownership and should turn more and more council houses over to owner-occupation and housing co-operatives'.

Fact: The Alliance would effectively withdraw the right to buy in areas where the local council does not want to allow council tenants to buy.

8. 'LESSON FOR STEEL ON EDUCATION'

'Confusion arose last night over the Liberal-SDP Alliance policy on private education.

Mr Steel was asked to clarify the Alliance's policy on the future of the independent schools, because there was apparently no mention of it in the manifesto.

Mr Steel insisted there was a mention but he failed to find it.

"If it isn't in the manifesto," said Mr Steel, "I can assure you I have done joint meetings with all of the Gang of Four at which this question has been asked and there is no difference between us. We believe in the freedom to educate."

(Guardian, 3rd June 1983)

9. MEN OF PRINCIPLE?

On 3rd May 1981, **Mr Roy Hattersley** went on LWT's *Weekend World* and condemned unilateral nuclear disarmament. He said:

'There's absolutely no obligation on the next Labour manifesto to include a policy which enables me personally to be a prominent member of the next Labour government. Unilateral disarmament, with which I profoundly disagree is a perfectly decent, honourable, socialist aspiration and if the Labour Party became a unilateralist party that doesn't stop it from being a proper, socialist, democratic socialist party. I would work for it, I would vote for it, I would support it. I wouldn't feel able to be one of the people who actually implemented the policy.'

Later in the interview he reinforced this. When Brian Walden said:

'it's very clear—that you would go on supporting the Labour Party come what may, but you could not serve in a Labour government if it had a manifesto of a kind of which you fundamentally disapprove,' Mr Hatterslev replied:

'Well of course. If you want me to say it a third time I'll do that for you'.

On BBC Panorama on 14th September 1981, Mr Healey took the same line as Mr Hattersley. He stated that on the disarmament question he would take the same view as Mr Gaitskell took. He said:

'That is to say I would fight to change the policy before the general election. If I failed then I wouldn't accept office in a Labour government'.

Labour are now fighting this election on a manifesto that pledges the party to implement unilateral nuclear disarmament. It clearly states that Labour will

'carry through in the lifetime of the next parliament our non-nuclear defence policy'.

If we are to believe that Mr Healey and Mr Hattersley are truthful men, then we must presume that a Labour government, elected on their present Manifesto, will not be able to count on the services of Mr Hattersley and Mr Healey.

10. A PENSIONER SPEAKS OUT

An extract from an open letter to Mr Denis Healey.

'Dear Sir,

I am no Party man, (and) I have given my vote to all the main political parties, as seemed best in the national interest at the time. However, I cannot allow the shocking lies, and personal attacks with which you are conducting the present election campaign to pass without protest.

I have been a pensioner for ten years . . . as long as Labour ruled, I derived little benefit . . . as my pension was raised, you clawed it back in tax. Under the Conservative Government I have been better off than ever before . . . To accuse this Government of not caring for the elderly is a cynical slander.'

John C. Gibson (Revd) 30 Parham Road, Bournemouth

11. HEALTH AND POPULAR OPINION

This week, the Labour Party launched a major attack on the Conservatives' policy of partnership between the NHS and the private sector. Once again the Labour Party is revealing itself to be out of touch with popular opinion. For its information and ours, we publish below some findings of an independent nationwide poll of nearly 2,000 adults carried out between 5th-9th May 1983 by NOP Market Research Ltd. on behalf of BUPA.

Attitudes to Private Medicine

People were asked to agree or disagree with a number of ideas put forward by the political parties on how the Health Service should be run in the future.

(i) The NHS and Private Sector should work together more closely 4 out of 5 adults *agree* that the NHS and private health sectors should work together more closely; 74 per cent of Labour supporters also agree with this proposition.

	All Adults	Voting Intention At Next Election			Union Members
	%	Con %	Lab %	SDP/Lib %	%
Agree (ie. favour cooperation between sectors)	81	89	74	80	80
Disagree	10	5	15	12	13
Others	9	6	11	8	7

(ii) Private Hospitals should be taken over by the State 65 per cent *disagree* with the suggestion that all private hospitals should be

nationalised

	All Adults	Voting Intention At Next Election			Union Members
	%	Con %	Lab %	SDP/Lib %	%
Disagree (i.e. oppose complete State take-over)	65	82	41	64	67
Agree	24	10	43	26	25
Others	11	8	16	10	8

12. CRYSTAL CLEAR

'I make no secret of it; we are the public expenditure party.'
(Mr Roy Hattersley, Daily Telegraph, 1st June 1983)

13. SOCIALIST THREAT TO THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY

Speaking in Luton on 2nd June, Mr Kenneth Baker, Minister of Information Technology, highlighted the danger that the Labour manifesto posed to the future of Britain's expanding electronics industry. He said:

'The whole electronics industry will be put at risk if Labour wins the General Election.

'Labour's Manifesto threatens to "establish a significant public stake . . . in electronics" and this means the State take over of some if not all of it. The electronics industry is one of our most successful, and this affects not only those who work in it, but the rest of us too. There are countless other industries which depend for their livelihood and future on a successful and inventive electronics industry. Destroy the one and you can destroy the rest'.

Companies Named

Emphasising that the threat was costly as well as wideranging he challenged Labour to make their intentions clear:

'So come clean Mr Foot. Tell us what you really have in mind.

- How much of GEC do you propose to grab? It's worth £5,900 million.
- How much of Plessey at £1,550 million?
- How much of Racal at £1,300 million?
- How much of Standard Telephone at £1,070 million?
- How much of Cable and Wireless at £1,047 million?
- How much of Ferranti at £454 million?
- How much of of ICL at £320 million?

That adds up to a shopping list of about £12,000 million—£600 for every family in this country. Equally important is the future of the 250,000 people these seven companies employ in this country alone. For under nationalisation the industry's bright prospects will be destroyed.'

Institutionalised Inefficiency

Mr Baker explained that the qualities needed in the electronics industry were exactly those that state control discouraged.

'Electronics is a highly competitive field. It thrives on innovation. It depends on entrepreneurial ability. If it is now confined in an East European type of state straightjacket those qualities will be lost. It is no

coincidence that the new technologies are Western, that the Iron Curtain marks the Eastern frontier of successful innovation. The Russians and their satellites have to beg, or buy or steal the new technology because their system denies just those qualities that can produce it.

Conservatives and the Future

The Conservatives, he said, saw a bright future for the industry:

'Bureaucrats and committees of wise men are no substitute for the market if we are to remain competitive.

'Our electronics industry must be left free to develop its full potential. Britain has enormous strengths in this field. Our research is second to none. This Government is determined to maintain this, and to help bring our expertise and discoveries to the marketplace. That is why we have trebled our spending on the new technologies and given the go-ahead for the £350 million Alvey programme to develop new super computers for the 1990's—the largest programme of its sort in Europe. That is the way to expand our industry and create jobs. Labour's plans for sterile state control would lead the industry down a dead end and imperil not only the livelihoods of those who now work in it, but of us all.

'Nationalisation has failed with the old industries. It must not now be allowed to kill the new'.

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