

Talked to H. Spicer
No further action
7/10

PRIME MINISTER

Modernisation of the Conservative Party

1. You asked to see again the note written by Michael Spicer - attached.
2. I have since communicated with Michael about the up-to-date position. Central Office are:
 - (a) appointing a person to co-ordinate the development of computer techniques in constituencies.
 - (b) setting up a programme of residential courses to train agents in the use of these techniques.
 - (c) drawing up plans to improve the leadership in constituencies.
3. Do you want to talk to the Chairman about how this programme of modernisation could be launched at the Conference? - Or would you like me to discuss this with both the Chairman and Michael Spicer?

Steven

Stephen

3rd October, 1983

We can talk
about this to-morrow.
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29th September, 1983

Dear Stephen

Thank you for your letter of 20th September.
The two immediate things we are doing are firstly appointing
a person at Central Office to co-ordinate the development
of computer techniques in constituencies and secondly
setting up a programme of residential courses to train
agents in the use of these techniques. We are also

drawing up plans to improve the leadership in constituencies.

Michael Spicer
Deputy Chairman

Stephen Sherbourne, Esq.,

20th September, 1983

You will remember that you put in to the Prime Minister a note on proposals to complete the modernisation of the Conservative Party which you wrote on 29th July.

The Prime Minister asked for this to be brought forward in September with a possibility of launching it at the Party Conference. Before I raise this with the Prime Minister again, which I propose to do in the next few days, I wanted to ask you if there were any further developments or new points to raise.

Stephen Sherbourne
Political Secretary

Michael Spicer, Esq., MP



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8/F
Conference
file

Perhaps we can
discuss this in
September - to
launch at the
Party conference
not

PRIME MINISTER

You asked me for a short note on proposals to complete the modernisation of the Conservative Party.

Our aim over the next two years I believe should be to continue the process of modernisation which we have already begun, while at the same time keeping a "happy ship". We already have one of the most advanced Direct Mail systems of any Party in Europe and we have laid down the basis for programmes to introduce computer technology into Constituencies. We certainly have a winning team at Central Office. Substantial changes to the team would be to threaten its coherence and effectiveness although there is clearly a need for more technology and management expertise. Broadly we should build on the foundations that have been laid.

The focus of any changes we make should be on the Areas and more particularly on the Constituencies. We must contingency plan against any growth in support for the Alliance whose efforts, on past precedent, are likely to be concentrated on the Constituencies. For this reason our Constituency organisations must become both more political and more effective and able to raise larger sums of money through subscriptions.

There should be two specific objectives:

First we should apply modern techniques and computer based technology in Constituency organisations above all to help to expand the membership and raise subscriptions, (while maintaining the autonomy of the Constituencies). Secondly, we should more effectively mobilise this enlarged Constituency membership to communicate the Government's message to the rest of the electorate.

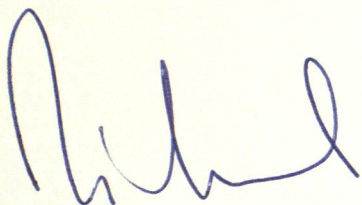
Many ideas for achieving these objectives will doubtless emerge over the months ahead. Some immediate requirements are:

1. To modernise and restructure the Area organisation into well managed, possibly Regional, Offices (employing a Regional COA a National Union Secretary who would be a Deputy RCOA, and responsible for programmes like TIPPS and Impact 80s, a Press and Communications Officer, a Computer Specialist, and a Finance Officer; five secretaries including a telephonist and a computer operator)
2. To recruit a Computer Specialist Manager at CCO to service Constituencies and co-ordinate Regional Offices.
3. Where appropriate to establish groupings of Constituencies equipped with modern technology.

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4. To involve and support Members of Parliament especially those in new critical seats.
5. To train Agents and key voluntary workers in the use of modern methods for communicating.
6. To encourage and support programmes for helping Constituencies to spread the word and become far more political e.g. TIPPS and "Impact".

I believe we can complete the modernisation of the Party on all levels within the next two years. I am sure also that with careful persuasion the National Union, Agents, MPs and Area Officials can be brought along with these reforms which will complete the process of equipping the Party with the best National, Regional and Constituency organisation in Europe.



MICHAEL SPICER
29th JULY, 1983