

THE NATIONAL UNION OF CONSERVATIVE AND UNIONIST ASSOCIATIONS

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday 10th July 1980

The Committee met at 32 Smith Square, Westminster on Thursday 10th July 1980 at 2.15 p.m. under the chairmanship of Sir Charles Johnston, TD. The names of the 107 members present are recorded.

1. Chairman's opening remarks

The new FCS Chairman, Mr Peter Young, was welcomed and his predecessor, Mr Stuart Bayliss, thanked by the Chairman. He said he was particularly happy to congratulate those present and immediate past NUC members who had received awards as follows in the Birthday Honours:-

Rt Hon. Lord Soames, GCMG, GCVO, CBE (Companion of Honour)
Sir Frank Marshall (Life Peerage)
Mr David Davenport-Handley, OBE, JP, DL)
Mr Sydney Plaister, CBE) (Knighthoods)
Major-General Brian Wyldebore-Smith, CB, DSO, OBE)
Mrs Ann Springman (Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire)
Colonel William Dalziel, TD, JP, DL)
Mr Arthur Hill)
Mrs Geraldine Scott-Hopkins) CBE
Mrs Jacqueline Lysaght)
Provost Tom Young)
Cllr Mrs R. M. Easton) OBE
Mr Graham Woodcock)

This was received with acclamation by the Committee, noting also with pleasure that Mrs Rosemary Smitherman was awarded the CBE, Mr Charles Chappell and Mr Michael Spungin the OBE, and Mr Clive Landa and Miss Ann Wells the MBE.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies from 34 members were noted and recorded.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th June, which had been circulated with the agenda, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. Business arising from the Minutes

(a) It was noted that Mr Lee Kuan Yew was now being approached to speak at the Party Conference on Friday morning.

(b) On the Chairman's invitation, Mr Donald Maclean referred to the results of the Glasgow Central by-election in which Mrs Anna McCurley lost her deposit and said that this was no reflection on the Candidate, who fought a splendid campaign and was highly regarded by the media. The constituency was a derelict inner-city one and, while there was good backing from Central Office, mutual aid was not satisfactory.

(c) The Chairman informed members that Mr Michael Grylls, MP had written to say that Mr Keith Wickenden, MP had agreed to be the first national President of the Small Business Bureau.

5. Elections by postal ballot

The Chairman referred to the Secretary's letter of 1st July, and it was agreed that the results of the two elections by postal ballot should be recorded as follows:-

Three men members on the General Purposes Committee

Mr Michael Craig-Cooper, TD	79 votes (elected)
Mr Michael Taylor	72 votes (elected)
Mr James Lemkin, GLC	48 votes (elected)
Mr Neil Westbrook	46 votes

Four members on the Party's Advisory Committee on Policy

Mr C. Russell Sanderson	90 votes (elected)
Mr Fred Hardman, MBE	68 votes (elected)
Sir Herbert Redfearn, JP, DL	67 votes (elected)
Mr F. Donald Walters	67 votes (elected)
Mr Geoff Campbell, MBE, JP	37 votes

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman congratulated those elected and thanked the other two members for standing, although they were not successful.

6. Consideration of resolutions received from Area, Constituency and other organisations

The Committee approved the action taken on the 5 resolutions shown on copy "B" circulated with the agenda and on the following, read out by the Secretary, which was carried by the North Western Area Finance and General Purposes Committee on 20th June and had been forwarded to the Rt Hon. James Prior, MP:-

"That Clause 16 be completely deleted from the Employment Bill and that a new clause making all secondary picketing and action of any kind illegal be substituted."

It was noted that motions from SCUA had been included for the Committee's information.

7. Report of the Redfearn Review Committee on the Quota System

Invited by the Chairman to open the discussion of the report, Sir Herbert Redfearn, JP, DL said that the proposals simplified the formula to be used and were unanimously recommended by the Review Committee. In reply to questions he said that no big increases were recommended, that the CBF could make adjustments, and that no minimum subscription was recommended, as this was a matter for the National Union itself. The proposals in the report were then approved on a motion by Mr Peter Lane, JP, seconded by Mr Michael Holt, to take effect from 1st April 1981. Thanks were recorded to Sir Herbert, the Review Committee and its secretary, Mr Stuart Newman, for their work.

8. Area Chairman's report

Mr Peter Lane, Chairman of South Eastern Area, reported on the situation and defined the Area and its main problems: transport, due to the development of Gatwick and increased traffic to the Channel ports; unemployment, which was less than 5% overall but rose to over 15% in places such as Margate; housing, which was the most expensive in the country and consequently placed heavy pressure on local authority housing. On the credit side, the Area had 100% success in last year's General and European Elections and in completing its quota. He referred to "Objectives for the 80s", whereby Area Officers were undertaking special responsibilities aimed at building up and sustaining the

Party. 24 seats had been lost in this year's local government elections and arrangements were in train to fight the Liberal challenge. After five moves since the General Election the Area office was now established in Francis Street. 37 of the 40 constituencies now had an Agent; £11,500 had been raised for the Thorneycroft Appeal at a Champagne Party at Penshurst. Mutual Aid to Greater London and Wessex Areas was regarded as vital. The Chairman **thanked** Mr Lane for his report.

9. Discussion on the political and economic situation

The Chairman explained that the Rt Hon. Lord Thorneycroft, CH had very kindly agreed to lead this discussion, as the Lord Chancellor had been unable to accept the Committee's invitation because of his duties and Mr James Scott-Hopkins, MEP was prevented by a plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. He then invited Lord Thorneycroft, Chairman of the Party Organisation, to speak.

Lord Thorneycroft said that there was tremendous public respect for the Prime Minister's strong leadership and positive action to fight inflation and unemployment. There would be rough going in the months ahead. Oil prices had soared 140% in 18 months and some £135 billion transferred from oil-using to oil-producing countries, with grave results in terms of increasing poverty in developing countries and world-wide prices and unemployment. On the domestic scene he said interest rates were slowly coming down and given time our policies would produce beneficial results. Textile mills were closing in, for example, Bradford, but new industries have been starting up, as shown in increased development of industrial sites. Salaries and wages played a vital part in the battle against inflation and Government must set an example in this respect. Local government was running into difficult waters and strategy was now being examined in Central Office. The problem of rates needed careful handling to avoid the risk of ending the autonomy of local government. But, especially during the Summer recess, we should concentrate on making known the more encouraging signs that have been appearing. Referring to the Employment Bill, he said the Party had chosen the slow and cautious approach rather than the dramatic alternative, and the results would depend on the unions' attitude and public reaction. The final issue would not be on Clause 17 of the Bill, but a decision on the whole matter of union immunities in present conditions. He answered questions and comments from 12 members and was thanked by the Chairman, with acclamation.

10. Business for the next meeting

Members noted that Mr James Scott-Hopkins had been provisionally asked to keep this date clear and agreed to leave a final decision on the speaker to the Officers nearer the time.

11. Any other business

The Committee approved a suggestion by Mr Nick Tate that congratulations should be conveyed to Rt Hon. John Nott, MP for the way in which he had handled the allocation of airway routes to Hong Kong.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.47 p.m.