

CONFIDENTIAL

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LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

138TH MEETING

5.00 p.m., Wednesday, 17th November 1976, in  
the Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

AGENDA

1. minutes of the 137th meeting.
2. Future business.
3. Forthcoming events.
4. Final Report of the Forestry Policy Group.
5. Any other business.

Conservative Research Department,  
24 Old Queen Street, London, S.W.1

CFP/MMH  
12.11.76

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 138th Meeting held at 5.00 p.m.  
on Wednesday, 17th November, 1976 in the  
Leader's Room in the House of Commons

Present: Mrs. Thatcher (In the Chair)

Mr. Whitelaw, Sir Keith Joseph,  
Lord Carrington, Lord Hailsham,  
Mr. Maudling, Sir Geoffrey Howe,  
Mr. Prior, Mr. Pym, Mr. Gilmour,  
Mr. Jenkin, Mr. St. John Stevas,  
Mr. Haseltine, Mr. Raison,  
Mr. Maude, Mr. Buchanan Smith,  
Mr. Edwards, Mr. Neave,  
Mrs. Oppenheim, Mr. Biffen,  
Lord Thorneycroft

Mr. Atkins

In attendance: Lord St. Aldwyn, Mr. Butler,  
Mr. Stanley, Mr. Patten, Mr. Hooson,  
Mr. Ridley, Mr. Nicholson

Apologies: Mr. Peyton

1. Proposed Business for the week 22nd - 29th November

On Monday, 22nd, and if necessary on Tuesday, 23rd November there would be further consideration of Lords Amendments to current Bills. If there was time on Monday 22nd there would be a debate on regional policy.

On Wednesday, 24th November there would be the State Opening of Parliament followed by the Debate on the Address, which would be continued on Thursday, 25th November, Friday, 26th November and Monday, 29th November.

2. Matters Arising on Business

It was noted that there was pressure in the Government to drop the whole Aircraft and Shipbuilding Nationalisation Bill for this Session if the Lords continued to stand firm on the exclusion of ship repairing companies from the scope of the Bill, and to seek to reintroduce it next Session using the Parliament Act to override the Lords' veto. There was a discussion on what our response might be, and the following points were agreed:

- (1) If, in the event of the Government dropping the Bill, certain shipbuilding companies encountered financial difficulties, we should be able to point out that the dropping of nationalisation in no way prevented the Government from being able to aid them if this was thought to be necessary.

(ii) The Lords would stand firm on the exclusion of ship repairing companies.

(iii) In view of reports that Lord Peart, the Leader of the House of Lords, was under the impression that the Conservative Peers proposed to stand firm on certain amendments to the Rent (Agriculture) and Health Service Bills, Lord Carrington was invited to indicate to Lord Peart that we had no intention of interfering further with the progress of either of those Bills. With regard to two amendments on the Education Bill which the Conservative and Liberal Peers might wish to stand on, Lord Carrington would decide what advice to give the Conservative peers in the light of his consultations with Lord Peart and Lord Byers.

### 3. Speaker's Conference

Mrs. Thatcher reported that the Prime Minister was continuing to refuse to permit the subject of the under-representation of England and Northern Ireland to appear on the Agenda for this Conference. There was a short discussion, and it was agreed that while we did not agree on the Agenda, we would nominate Members to take part in the Conference and would reserve the right to raise the question of under-representation during the course of the proceedings.

### 4. Voting

There was a short discussion on the question of voting at the end of the debate which had been taking place that afternoon on whether to refer to the Privilege's Committee a matter which the Speaker had ruled to be a prima facie breach of Privilege. It was agreed that, in accordance with the convention that the Opposition front bench normally supported such a reference once the Speaker had so ruled, members of the Shadow Cabinet would vote with the Government.

### 5. Future Business

There should be a full discussion on how we would vote on the Second Reading of the proposed Bill in the next Session to set up Assemblies in Scotland and Wales. This would take place after the discussion on the Queen's Speech at the next meeting on Tuesday, 23rd November. Mr. Whitelaw would circulate a paper.

The meeting closed at 5.50 p.m.