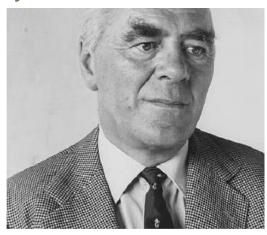
Reg Paget (1908-1990)



Labour MP for Northampton from 1945 until 1974, when the constituency was abolished

By Sue Miller



Reginald Thomas Guy Des Voeux Paget, Baron Paget of Northampton (Reg) had an unusual background for a Labour MP, he came from a long line of Conservative MPs but joined the Labour Party while at university. Educated at Eton and Cambridge, on graduation he became a barrister in 1934 and became a QC in 1947.

Notably, he served as the defence advocate for **Field Marshal Erich von Manstein** during his post-World War II war crimes trial. He later wrote a book about the case. As an MP he was considered **an independent voice** within the House of Commons.

He played a key role in the campaign to **abolish capital punishment**, actively opposing the execution of Derek Bentley. Paget was also known for being the slowest speaker in the House of Commons. Unusually for a Labour MP, was the master of the Pytchley Hunt for several years.

When his seat was abolished, he was created a life peer as Baron Paget of Northampton in 1975.

Paget's views on the European Economic Community (EEC) shifted significantly. Initially, he was supportive, but he later became a strong opponent, voting against membership in 1971 and speaking out and voting against remaining in the EEC during the **1975 referendum**