

Conservative Research Department

24 Old Queen Street, London SW1H 9HX Telephone 01-930 1471

Chairman: ANGUS MAUDE, TD, MP
Director: CHRISTOPHER PATTEN
Consultant Director: JAMES DOUGLAS, OBE

MRS. THATCHER

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Walden - Weekend World

The Research Department has assembled the following material:

1. A note detailing such straws in the wind as we have on how Walden's mind is working.
2. A selection of Walden's journalism over the last decade or so, with a brief introduction.
3. A selection of Walden's most important Parliamentary speeches.

B.A.

Bruce Anderson

Advance hints on Walden's thinking

1. There have been several indications that Walden is very interested in the Selsdon Park Conference and its aftermath, and that this may well feature in the interview. His team asked Press Department for copies of Mr. Heath's and Mrs. Thatcher's major speeches in late 69/early 70, and also for a copy of the 1970 Manifesto.

(There was nothing at all controversial, nor anything which looked obviously quotable, in any of the speeches we sent, with the possible exception of an explicit rejection of incomes policy by Mr. Heath (enc.).

2. Also, Mr. Walden's team interviewed, inter alia, Peter Walker and Brendon Sewill.

3. It may very well be that they are intending to quote to Mrs. Thatcher her own statements on Conservative philosophy, and then to attempt to argue that this will all be unviable in practice.

4. It is easy to imagine possible questioning scenarios:
- Questions on the Selsdon Conference, what role Mrs. Thatcher herself played, and the final shape of the Selsdon policies. (Albeit that the importance of what actually happened at Selsdon itself is vastly exaggerated in Labour mythology, Walden will presumably claim that 'Selsdon' is a useful shorthand for the whole range of Conservative policies in 1970).

- What happened to Selsdon after 1970? Where did the Government lose its way? (Possible questions as to what part

Mrs. Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph played in crucial Cabinet discussion).

- Why Conservative policy changed? After all, Mr. Heath was never supposed to lack political will. Could it not be that ^{the} ideologically based policies of opposition are bound to founder in the real world of government? Why does Mrs. Thatcher think things will be any different next time?

- It is possible that Mr. Prior and Sir Keith Joseph will be referred to here. "Mrs. Thatcher and the Conservative Party even in Opposition are having to come down on Mr. Prior's side, against all their strongest instincts. Surely this process will be repeated ad infinitum in Government...?"

The Walden team also asked both Brendon Sewill and Research Department about Conservative policy on cash limits, especially as regards the Coal Industry. There are obviously several questions that could arise from this:

- What would the Conservative Government do if the Coal Board announced that in order to pay the miners a 45% increase they were cancelling the capital investment programme for the next two years?

Of course, this is just a particularly astringent phrasing of the standard cash limits conundrum.