

CONFIDENTIAL

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LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

221ST MEETING

4.30 p.m., Tuesday, 31st October 1978, in
the Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

AGENDA

1. The Queen's Speech.
2. Any other business.

LEADER'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 221st Meeting held at 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 31st October 1978, in the Leader's Room at the House of Commons.

Present: Mrs. Thatcher (in the Chair)

Mr. Whitelaw, Sir Keith Joseph, Lord Carrington, Lord Hallsham, Lord Thorneycroft, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Sir Ian Gilmour, Mr. Pym, Mr. Jenkin, Mr. Peyton, Mr. Neave, Mr. Heseltine, Mr. St. John Stevas, Mr. Maude, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Nott, Mrs. Oppenheim, Mr. King, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Atkins.

In attendance: Sir Michael Havers, Mr. Fowler, Lord Denham, Mr. Butler, Mr. Stanley, Mr. Patten, Mr. Wolfson, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Nicholson.

Apologies: Mr. Prior, Mr. Davies.

1. The Queen's Speech and the Debate on the Address

There was a brief discussion on the contents of the Queen's Speech. It was then agreed that the following should be the order of subjects which we should take during the Debate on the Address:

Thursday, 2nd November, Health (Mr. Jenkin, Dr. Vaughan).

Friday, 3rd November, Education (Mr. St. John Stevas, Dr. Boyson).

Monday, 6th November, Home Office Affairs, (Mr. D. Howell, Mr. Whitelaw).

Tuesday, 7th November, Rhodesia and the Bingham Report (Mr. Pym).

Wednesday, 8th November, Rhodesia (Mr. Hurd, Mr. Luce).

Thursday, 9th November, The Economy (Sir Geoffrey Howe, Mr. Maude).

It was noted that the Rhodesia Sanctions Order would be moved at the end of a 1½ hours debate after 10.00 o'clock on Wednesday, 8th November.

It was also agreed that we should move amendments on Wednesday, 8th November, and Thursday, 9th November. The first would censure the Government's handling of the Rhodesia issue and the second would be on the economy: the wording would be agreed by Mrs. Thatcher, Sir Geoffrey Howe and Mr. Maude. There would be three line whips on both amendments.

2. Rhodesia

Mr. Pym introduced a discussion, in particular on our position over the renewal of the Rhodesia sanctions Order. Mr. Atkins reported on the state of opinion among backbenchers. The following points were agreed:

(i) There would not be an official vote by the party on the Sanctions Order.

(ii) A short note should be prepared for members of the Shadow Cabinet to assist them in replying to representations from backbenchers. This should contain the main arguments we were using against the view that the party should officially oppose the renewal of the Sanctions Order, inter alia the need not to surrender sanctions as a bargaining counter and on the means of bringing all the parties in the dispute together.

(iii) It was desirable that we should have a vigorous amendment condemning the Government's handling of Rhodesia.

(iv) Mrs. Thatcher would not refer to the sanctions issue in her speech the following day but would ask a number of probing questions on the Government's decision to supply arms to Zambia. Lord Carrington and Mr. Pym would assist her in providing those questions.

(v) No reference would be made to our decisions about this vote before the meeting of the 1922 Committee on Thursday evening.

3. Pay and the Economy

There was a short discussion on our position on pay and inflation in view of recent speeches and interviews. It was agreed that Mrs. Thatcher would, in her speech the following day, make clear again that we were wholly opposed to irresponsible pay bargaining: we had not changed our ground from the argument set out on pages 14-16 of "The Right Approach to the Economy".

The meeting closed at 6.15 p.m.