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C(82) 37

COPY NO

83

28 October 1982

CABINET

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE PROROGATION
OF PARLIAMENT

Note by the Secretary of the Cabinet

I attach for the information of the Cabinet, copies of The Queen's Speech on the Prorogation of Parliament, in the amended form in which it has been approved by The Queen.

Signed ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Cabinet Office

28 October 1982

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QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT

THURSDAY, 28TH OCTOBER, 1982

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Duke of Edinburgh and I have received much pleasure from the knowledge that so many people shared with us our happiness in the birth of a son to The Prince and Princess of Wales.

The Duke of Edinburgh and I were pleased to receive the State Visit of His Majesty The Sultan of Oman in March. We also recall with pleasure the pastoral visit of His Holiness Pope John Paul the Second in May, and the visit in June of the President of the United States of America and Mrs. Reagan as my guests.

We look back with much satisfaction on the visits we have made this year. We were in Canada in April to sign the proclamation of the Constitution Act 1982 and we are now concluding a tour including visits to Australia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Fiji. As Head of the Commonwealth I was present in Brisbane to close the Commonwealth Games.

We were greatly saddened by the death in August of King Sobhuza of Swaziland.

My Government welcomed the independence of Antigua and Barbuda and its decision to join the Commonwealth. They also welcomed the admission of the Republic of Maldives to membership of the Commonwealth.

My Government responded swiftly to Argentina's unlawful and unprovoked invasion of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. They made strenuous efforts to persuade the Argentine Government to withdraw their forces peacefully but were eventually obliged to resort to military action in self defence and to protect the democratic rights of the Falkland Islanders. The Armed Services and the Merchant Navy have earned the gratitude of the nation by the courage, skill and devotion to duty they displayed in the course of their successful campaign. My Government profoundly regret the loss of life and casualties incurred. They have begun the urgent task of economic and social rehabilitation and further development of the Islands.

My Government were deeply grateful for the support shown during the Falklands crisis by so great a proportion of the international community, in particular by the countries of the Commonwealth, the European Community and the North Atlantic Alliance, and by the dependent territories.

My Government welcomed the entry of Spain into the North Atlantic Alliance. They have continued to fulfil their commitment to real increases in defence spending and have announced further measures to strengthen our defences and make good the losses suffered during the Falklands conflict. They played an active role at the meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Alliance in June. They have taken part in Alliance consultations over the negotiations on intermediate range nuclear forces between the United States and the Soviet Union and have warmly welcomed the resumption of negotiations on strategic nuclear forces. They have played a full part at the Second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament and in other arms control and disarmament negotiations.

With other members of the Alliance and of the European Community, my Government have condemned the imposition of martial law in Poland. They have continued to support efforts to restore the independent and non-aligned status of Afghanistan.

My Government have played a constructive role in the development of the European Community and were able to make useful progress during the period of the United Kingdom Presidency. They have continued to negotiate for an acceptable revised Common Fisheries Policy, and have participated in negotiations with Spain and Portugal on their forthcoming accession to the Community.

My Government have continued, with our Community partners, to seek a comprehensive settlement of the Arab/Israel dispute and an end to the conflict in the Lebanon with all its tragedies.

My Government have participated in continued efforts to reach a settlement in Namibia and have supported attempts to solve the problem caused by the occupation of Cambodia by Vietnam.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

I thank you for the provision that you have made for the honour and dignity of the Crown and for the public services.

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

My Government have maintained the economic policies necessary to strengthen the foundations of economic recovery. They have continued to make progress in reducing inflation and achieving lower interest rates and have helped business and individuals through tax changes and improved incentives designed to encourage the productive private sector and to promote the wider ownership of wealth. My Government believe that these policies offer the best hopes of achieving a lasting reduction in the present distressingly high levels of unemployment. Meanwhile, the help given under the special employment measures has been substantially increased.

Legislation has been passed to facilitate private investment in parts of the businesses of the British National Oil Corporation and the British Gas Corporation and to promote competition in the gas industry. An Act has been passed to reduce further the involvement of the public sector in transport.

Legislation has been passed to improve the law on industrial relations. A Youth Training Scheme has been drawn up, and other training arrangements have been improved. A comprehensive programme is being vigorously pursued to improve management and efficiency in the Civil Service.

Legislation has been passed to protect ratepayers from supplementary rates and to improve the accountability and efficiency of local authorities. An Act has been passed to clarify the powers of the Greater London Council to provide travel concessions for the elderly and disabled.

Provision has been made for the re-establishment of a representative Assembly in Northern Ireland, and elections to it have taken place. The Royal Ulster Constabulary, supported by the Army, have continued to serve the people of Northern Ireland with steadfastness, dedication, and courage.

An Act has been passed to give the courts stronger and more flexible sentencing powers, especially in regard to young offenders, and to make other improvements in the criminal justice system. Legislation has been passed giving local authorities in England and Wales powers to regulate various activities which might otherwise cause nuisance or give offence.

Acts have been passed to amend the law governing jurisdiction and the enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters and to improve the arrangements for legal aid in criminal cases and the general administration of justice.

My Government have protected the real value of the retirement pension and other related benefits. The law on mental health in England and Wales has been reformed. An Act has been passed to establish a system of unified housing benefit and to place a duty on employers to provide sick pay during the early weeks of sickness.

In Scotland the law relating to civic government has been modernised and other changes have been made in local authorities' functions and responsibilities.

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may attend you.