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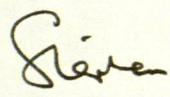
PRIME MINISTER

Party Conference Speech

I attach offerings for you to see:-

- Flag A - A personal view by me about the kind of speech we need (written quite separately from other people's contributions)
- Flag B - Ferdy Mount's views on the speech as relayed by John Redwood
- Flag C - Contribution by Michael Alison
- Flag D - A section on jobs and miners written by John Redwood
- Flag E - Section on international affairs written by Lord Thomas

We meet on Wednesday afternoon for 30 minutes to discuss the speech and then meet in earnest next Friday and over the weekend at Chequers.



STEPHEN SHERBOURNE

28.9.84

PRIME MINISTER

Party Conference Speech

It is likely that by the time of the Party Conference the coal strike will be seen by the Party and the country as the biggest challenge to your authority since the Falklands. The speech must acknowledge this.

1. Structure: This means a different kind of conference speech; making it more of a single issue speech than normal. That means resisting the sense of obligation to have a substantial paragraph on every subject. This need not be restrictive: the implications of the coal dispute go wide and allow you to include in your speech matters of supreme importance - freedom; trade union powers; a go-ahead economy; taxation and public spending; economic prospects; unemployment; law and order; social responsibility; and defending the kind of Britain we believe in.

2. Content (on coal and its implications):
 - (a) a step by step account of how we have got to where we are (this approach worked well in last year's speech on defence/disarmament)

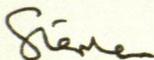
 - (b) a new presentation of the economic case - avoiding phrases like "uneconomic pits" which people don't understand; explaining in £ and p the costs which different groups of people are being asked to bear by the NUM; the risks of the 'museum society'; the blank cheque which Scargill is asking for - and again what that could mean in £ and p. It must be expressed in personal terms and in a fresh way.

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- (c) what is happening in mining communities: the fear and intimidation; the courage of the working miners and their families; the responsibility the Government has to act for the majority of Britons.
 - (d) an understanding by you of the fear of communities threatened with pit closures and unemployment - and the responsibilities it throws on to the Government, the NCB and the individuals themselves.
 - (e) a re-iteration of freedom under the law. What it means, its history in Britain, the protection of the freedom of individuals, the threat posed by the mob to the freedom of others.
3. The speech as a whole: The beginning and end of your speech can then set the wider context - what the Government is doing for Britain: for freedom, for economic recovery, for individual responsibility, for helping those in need. The mood here must be optimism, to show that our policies are working. That will set the backcloth for the main part on coal, to show that the NUM are going against the grain, and to chime in with the slogan "Britain winning through".

Of course, there will have to be a clear and measured assault on the Labour leadership, done with 'gravitas' rather than jokily. And there must be some light, topical touches.

This is my personal view of how I see the speech in general.



STEPHEN SHERBOURNE

28.9.84

I spoke to Ferdy as requested.

Ferdy said he did not wish to be involved in drafting.

He said the speech should convey a sense of movement in government. It should respond to the challenge that the Government has become complacent and is now stagnating. "Stability is not enough." It should convey a sense of economic progress, of Britain being better regarded abroad, and should set out to show what the Government is going to do, why it has to do it, and how it intends to do it. He mentioned, for example, standards in the National Health Service and in other state sector activities. He expressed concern that the Government was going to stumble over the question of acid rain and be outgunned by the Opposition.

I then drew his attention back to the question of jobs and how we should tackle the jobs issue, and what new language we might employ. He argued that the Government must be positive, convey a sense of dedication to do something about the problem, and should take some part but not all of the blame. It could start by explaining that the number of new jobs is up on a year ago, although many thought this was impossible, and should stress that the hare (new jobs) does in the end overtake the tortoise (declining industry). The speech should look at who the job-creators are, should stress the importance of good training and the need for standards in schools, and should contrast unions prepared to

do no-strike deals - like the EPTU - to create new jobs, and those trade unions that are job-destroyers.

In conclusion, he said we should show that we won't let this problem pass on the other side of the road.