

CONTRIBUTION FROM CHRIS PATTEN FOR PRIME MINISTER'S PARTY CONFERENCE
SPEECH

FROM IMPOSSIBILITY TO VICTORY

It is twelve years since I first stood on this platform as Leader of the Conservative Party.

We were all a lot younger then. Some of us still feel quite young today. And I am told that the second twelve years is much easier.

One or two things have changed since 1975. In that year we were still ~~recovering~~ ^{suffering} from ~~our~~ ^{the} fourth Election defeat ~~out of~~ ^{we suffered} the ~~five we suffered~~ ^{election} in the '60s and '70s. People said that we couldn't govern the country again. ~~Or, at least, that we~~

Remember - we had all been - 2 -

lectured about political impossibility. You couldn't be a Conservative, and sound like a Conservative, and win an Election. And you certainly couldn't win an Election and then act like a Conservative and win another Election. And, what was absolutely beyond argument, was that you couldn't win two Elections and go on behaving like a Conservative, and win yet a third Election. Don't you just harbour the faintest suspicion that somewhere along the line something went wrong with that theory.

I've got a straightforward idea of my own. If you stop talking and acting like a Conservative, that's the moment you'll get beaten. And that's the time you will deserve to get beaten.

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PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

24 Feb 87

P.M.
A few notes on a theme
to W

From Wadrow by post

The Labour Party, the Liberals, the SDP and the doubters
have been saying since 1979 that ^{Conservatism} Thatcherism ^{and doesn't} wouldn't work.

Now we learn that all our political opponents are feverishly
^{packaging up their} adjusting their policies ^{to look like ours} because Thatcherism works so well.

~~Once we were told that every new piece of nationalisation
could never be reversed. The centre of political gravity was
shifting inexorably leftwards towards more state Socialism.~~

It is music in our ears to discover that ^{openly} no Party now
dares to say that it will take away from the people what we
have given back to the people.

*People's
Capitalism*

~~Some things of course are impervious to change. The Labour
Party - despite the best efforts of advertising agents and
wishful thinkers, of Brahms and Gould - remains...the Labour
Party. Unredeemed and unelected. The language may alter.
We hear no more of nationalisation. Nowadays it's called social
ownership. There's talk of a great policy re-think. But it's
still Socialism that's on offer. I read somewhere that Labour
want to try to appeal to the yuppies. No one should be taken in.~~

After all...

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After all what's on offer are the klappies - Kinnock's Labour Party is extremely Socialist.

Maybe we've had more effect on what used to be called the Alliance. Today, that so-called alliance is split down the middle between those who understand that times have changed and those who want to bring back the old times. To bring back the '60s. Bring back inflation, Bring back incomes policies; Bring back National plans;

not order

I used to wonder sometimes during the Election Campaign what the alliance leaders meant by consensus politics. I suppose that's what we've seen in action since the 11th June. If that's consensus, they can keep it. Poor Dr Owen is just the latest in the line to finish up with six inches of fraternal Steel between the shoulder blades.

I hope that those former Social Democrats who are seriously interested in politics, seriously interested in shaping the next decade, seriously committed to making our market economy competitive and our social policies successful, will join us in our work. They face a choice between a thoughtful commitment to improving Britain's Government and our quality of life or a frivolous involvement in Mission Impossible - trying to make the modern Liberal Party credible. Once, it was Gladstone, Asquith and Lloyd George. Today it's Steel, Smith and Alton - not quite the most suitable heirs to a great political tradition.

So, with open arms, we would welcome to the Conservative Party the real Liberals who believe in liberty, and the serious Social Democrats who believe in an enterprise economy and a strongly defended Britain; and

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~~defended Britain. My message to them is this--~~ Work with us.
Share our dreams. Help us build Britain's future.

When I am asked what we have achieved so far, it seems to me
/neither very...

neither very difficult to understand nor very sophisticated
to explain. What we have tried to do is to re-establish at
the ~~heart~~ ^{of politics} ~~of public debate and public policy~~ a handful of
simple truths.

First

Sound finance is vital.
First we said that no economy can thrive where the currency
is debased. We said that no society can be fair or stable where
inflation eats up savings, and redistributes the pounds in
everyone's pocket.

A few years ago, it was a common place of political discussion
that we would have to accommodate a high rate of inflation as
part of the price of living a modern industrial democracy.
But we knew that inflation threatens democracy. And we put
its defeat at the top of our agenda.

That is a battle which never ends. And that is why, year after
year, we have to fight ^{to have to be sure we spend no more than} what we spend in line with what we earn.
~~... only on the last~~
~~decade of the present century, but on the first decade of the~~
next.

ve SKONI

inset

Our ~~second insight~~ was that men and women need the incentive that goes with keeping more of what you earn and the security that goes with ownership.

So as economic growth has taken off, we have ^{would do} put tax cuts ahead of ^{more public spending} spending increases. And until we have provided incentives at every level of earnings, that will remain our order of priorities.

People earn more than they did under Labour, as an honest teacher or nurse would admit. And they ^{keep more of what they earn} pay less tax. But we haven't reached the end of the road of tax cuts and tax reform. Not by a long way.

New para) Home ownership has soared and share ownership with it

We had to fight every inch of the way the legislative battle to give council house tenants that right. Against Labour opposition. Against Liberal opposition. // Does Mr Kinnoek now applaud what has happened? Is he pleased that so many families have the same right of ownership as he. // Does Mr Steel welcome

it? Now that it has happened, now that it has proved so popular, is it the sort of liberal liberating measure of which the leader of the Liberal Party approves?

Political slogans don't always coincide with political actions. For years we've talked about wanting to create a property-owning democracy. Looking back, I wonder whether we did as much in those days as we should have done to achieve that goal. I don't believe anyone will be able, in the years ahead, to make a similar charge against us.

N. 10

Primitivism continues apace. And

~~1~~ 7

what an amazing example we have given the world. Privatization features in countries as far apart as Togo and the People's Republic of China. In the United States and in France, In Tanzania and in Senegal, governments are following our example. It is the spring-tide of the people's capitalism which is sweeping away the remnants of marxist socialism.

(Handwritten mark)

N. 10 (Hiki)

Encouraging free enterprise is what if we want to create
The ~~third main element~~ in our down to earth philosophy has been
the ~~passionate belief~~ that the ~~market and competition~~ are the ~~best~~ ^{free enterprise and liberty} ~~engine of prosperity~~ and the ~~best guardian of liberty~~. ^{what Adam Smith called 'the natural system of liberty'}

The wealth for a prosperous future.

There's nothing very original in that. It's an idea eloquently developed by economists and philosophers over the years; an idea which has, when put into practice, shaped the political institutions of free societies and brought unimagined wealth to countries and continents.

/But it's a...

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But it's a profound truth which, perhaps because of its very clarity, we forget from time to time, forget at our peril.

Curiously and a little nervously at first, yet with growing enthusiasm and commitment, we have rediscovered this old truth, in Britain and abroad too. We can even hear faint and distant echoes of our arguments in Moscow. What price Socialism in Britain, when Mr Gorbachev doesn't seem to keep on it in the Soviet Union!

STRENGTH
highlight

But look at what we have achieved - Price stability. Tax cuts. Ownership. Enterprise. Look at the results we've achieved already.

There is a new spirit of individual initiative

Thanks heavens, our economic rejuvenation has begun to cut into the unemployment figures. X and Y have happened. We are creating more jobs not through spending money. Not by subsidies. Not by industrial plans. There are more jobs because our industry

fighting unemployment

is more successful. Winning markets is the way to creating jobs. Economic success has enabled us to play a more prominent

INTEREST

and creative role in the world at large, arguing for the same approach to the world's economic problems that has helped us tackle our own. International bankers, the Finance Ministers of other nations, all listen to you a lot harder when they owe you money rather than the other way around. We are now the second biggest investor in the world, the model of a stable economy. That is...

Handwritten scribbles and arrows pointing to the text.

We do help unemployment by letting new ideas & new industries have their chance.

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economy. That ^{is} ~~is one~~ reason why ^{the Nigel Lawson has} we have been able to play a leading role in helping to tackle the ^{world} ~~global~~ debt crisis. In the years ahead, we shall be in the vanguard of the fight to roll back protectionism and to secure free trade. We shall be fighting for the steady ~~reduction of world food subsidies~~ and for the reform of the food and budgetary policies of the European Community. A strong Britain counts again in the world.

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sketch pink

~~And while I am on the subject of broadcasting, I want to add this.~~
^{Some of our commentators}
 sometimes wish ~~our~~ ~~broadcasters~~, who have to keep in the forefront of ~~technology~~, also kept up to date with their ideas, and especially their ideas about Britain. They should recognise, as the world outside is doing, that Britain is a changed nation these days.

Handwritten initials and scribbles.

The old Britain of the 1970s, with its endless strikes, poor productivity, low investment, winters of discontent, above all its gloom, its pessimism, its sheer defeatism—that Britain is gone for ever.

We now have a new Britain, booming, confident, optimistic, rejoicing in its economic strength—a Britain to which foreigners come to admire, to imitate, to invest—a Britain whose people own their own homes, are acquiring a stake in their economy, are exercising the expanded freedom of choice now open to them. We now have a Britain to be proud of again.

(4)

I have reminded you where the political adventure began. And I have pointed out where the path has led. But ^{is not} ~~is~~ this where we pitch our tents? ^{This is not} ~~is this~~ where we dig in? ~~It was~~ ^{was} our last Election victory ^{what best looks} a staging post on a longer journey? ^{much}

was but

What I know with every fibre of my being is that it would be fatal for us to stand where we are. What is to be our slogan for the 1990s? Are we really going to excite Britain's imagination and win Britain's backing with the promise that we have what we hold. Is 'consolidate' to be the word that we stitch on our banners? Whose blood runs faster in their veins at the prospect of five years of consolidation?

~~That isn't to say that we can abandon what we have achieved.~~
~~We hold on to that. And we move on - applying the same principles~~
~~- on to more challenging terrain.~~ ^{ground}

END

Let me explain exactly what I mean.

In the 1980s I believe that we have won the argument over economic policy. But we still find ourselves locked in debate about social issues. About education. About welfare. About health. About the balance that a free society has to strike between encouraging the successful and protecting those who are in need.