

PRIME MINISTER

CONFERENCE SPEECH

I promised you last night a note on possible themes and format for your Conference speech.

You indicated that, in the light of events in the Communist bloc, you presently felt like making "This is the age of Conservatism" - ie the rapidly growing relevance of Conservatism to the world - your theme.

This, and the increasing importance of green issues is clearly a most powerful party conference platform. My concern has therefore been to find a way of fitting movements at home into what is, essentially, a theme based on events abroad.

This has led me to suggest the following structure:

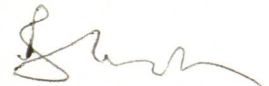
- Bold, arresting introduction: "This is the age of Conservatism"
- Recognition that media trying to write you off (for the third time!) because of present difficulties.
- In fact those difficulties - inflation, need to keep spending within prudent bounds etc - underline the importance of Conservative principle of soundly based economic and financial policies to which action already in train will return us.
- Elements of "The Age of Conservatism"
  - Soviet recognition that Communism doesn't work: need for free markets and incentives to deliver goods
  - Dissatisfaction with the poverty of Marxist-Leninism - the ism which guarantees the poor remain poor and deprived



- Pace of change: Poland, Hungary and now East Germany
- But the immense difficulties in the Communist bloc, and need to help and encourage those who are striving to make this "The Age of Conservatism" a reality in their own lands - by helping them, for example, through management training to operate a free market
- The warning of China - the need for political as well as economic reform and vice versa
- The advance of democracy based on free market philosophy in Hong Kong and Pacific Rim, Latin America and Southern Africa
- So the impending victory for Conservatism - as outlined in the essay which Charles Powell has commended to you
- But cannot leave it at that; free market philosophy needs to be practised - and maintained; regression needs to be watched and dealt with
- Hence need to preserve open markets and fight protectionism and monopolistic tendencies
- Hence need not merely to ensure that EC does not become Fortress Europe after 1997 or an encumbered "Social" Europe of the kind that dragged the UK down pre-1979
- Thus the argument is not over our commitment to Europe; it is over the nature of Europe - a free market, free enterprise Europe; the Europe of the founding fathers
- Nor is argument over sensible, practical co-operation between member States - indeed protection of the global environment requires more international collaboration. This is what is happening - with a strong British Government input - naturally, because a Conservative Government is a conserving government; a Government which seeks to manage change
- Environmental objective: sustainable development - ie facilitating progress by using its fruits partly to conserve the past



- What better exposition of our objective in reforming the NHS - to conserve the best while improving the operation of the whole? Of course we want to conserve the best. The aim is to get the worst up to it and, in so doing, serve the interests of those the NHS is there to serve: the patients
- This brings me back to where I started - the sound economic and financial policies which are the bedrock of Conservatism
- How else does one fund the preservation of the environment, the improvement of social and health care; raising the quality of education; the upgrading of housing? Not through socialism which is against wealth. But through the free market philosophy of Conservatism which aims to create wealth in the service of mankind
- Political bit - the Labour Party doesn't believe a word of this. For electoral reasons it recognises the need to conceal its purpose. But that purpose is not to free the individual to create wealth; it is to shackle the individual by telling him what to do.
- The Labour Party has nothing in common with the changes now taking place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.
- Instead it represents the forces of reaction - not conservatism - in Britain; the reversion to the struggle of the class war in which, in order to preserve an army in the face of the property owning opportunities of conservatism, it has to suppress every opportunity of the masses. In other words, Labour seeks to conserve nothing except the power of the political elite. Contrast that with the liberalisation of the people manifest in the property owning democracy that Britain has become under the Conservatives.
- Thus, The Age of Conservatism is nigh. Let us make it a reality by overcoming our present difficulties and so advancing the freedom and overall quality of life that is the true aim of the Conservative Party.



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