

change

conservatives.com

Spring 2006

I'M FIGHTING FOR THEIR FUTURES



By David Cameron

I'VE been in Parliament for just under five years, so to some people that makes me a new boy. The advantage is that I see things through a fresh pair of eyes. I'm not hidebound by the past and I'm not hung up on the present.

I'm interested only in the future – especially for our young people. Our country faces huge challenges and we have to rise to them.

We need a dynamic economy to create jobs, wealth and opportunity. But we're tumbling down the competitiveness rankings and one in five people now work for the state.

We need a stronger society, where individuals, families and communities create strong foundations for people's lives. But today almost every social indicator is going in the wrong direction, especially teenage pregnancy, family breakdown, drug and alcohol addiction.

Challenges

And despite billions more being spent on the NHS and schools, we still have millions on waiting lists and more than half our kids leave school without a decent education.

We need action to build a more sustainable environment and to tackle climate change. But in a world where we're seeing more droughts and floods and extreme weather



We must rise to big challenges for the sake of our young people, says David Cameron, pictured at a school in Essex

conditions, we have a government with no prospect of meeting its own targets. So our aims and our challenges are clear: a dynamic economy, a strong society, a sustainable environment. It's also clear that Labour can't meet these long-term challenges – but the Conservatives can.

We believe that the more you trust people, the stronger they and society become. We believe in sharing responsibility; that government

doesn't have all the answers; that we're all in this together – individuals, families, business, voluntary organisations, social enterprises, and government.

But we know we have to change. I stood for the leadership because I was fed up with hearing that this Party is out of touch, backward-looking and lacks compassion.

That's not the Conservative Party I'm leading, as you'll see when you read this news update. We stand for

We trust people, Labour boss them about

LABOUR have had nine years to change Britain for the better, and haven't done it. They could have 90 years and still wouldn't do it, because they have the wrong values. They don't trust people – they tell them what to do, they boss them around, they ban things and pass new laws instead of giving people power and responsibility.

They don't share responsibility – they think that government has all the answers and so they give us a constant stream of quangos and laws and regulations. Under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, the state keeps getting bigger but the long-term challenges are just not being tackled.

modern, compassionate Conservatism and we're fighting to improve the quality of life for everyone in our country.

To build a dynamic economy we will put economic stability first so people know their mortgages are safe. To build a strong society we know the right test for our policies is how they help the most disadvantaged, not the rich.

We will improve public services for everyone, not help a few to opt out. And to build a sustainable environment we will put climate change and environmental policy at the heart of our agenda, not just an afterthought.

This is the modern Conservative credo. This is the change we're making, and it's built to last.



‘Labour has betrayed the values of our precious Health Service’

see page 3



‘Every parent knows our plan will drive up school standards’

see page 2



‘Time to blow the whistle on Gordon Brown's ever-rising tax burden’

see page 2



‘We support mothers who want family life as well as a career’

see page 3

MEET THE PARTY'S NEW FACES OF MODERN BRITAIN – SEE PAGE 3

Defenders of freedom

NO party can pretend terrorism doesn't exist. But it is vital to strike a workable balance between protecting lives and protecting people's liberty. Conservatives will always be the hard-nosed defenders of freedom. We support effective proposals to deal with terrorism,

but bringing in identity cards is not effective. They do not prevent terrorist attacks and the £14 billion it will cost to introduce ID cards by 2013 could be better spent on things that we know will work, like boosting the police, security services and armed forces.

HELP FIRST TIME BUYERS

AVERAGE house prices have risen faster than average incomes, stretching desperate young families to financial breaking point to get on the property ladder. Shadow Chancellor George Osborne says only 37 per cent of new households can afford to buy their own home, compared to 46 per cent under the Conservatives in the late 1980s. The Government's shared equity Homebuy scheme is mainly limited to key workers or social tenants and Osborne says a Conservative government will make a real difference to first-time buyers by introducing a much more ambitious plan. And it will help regenerate inner cities and towns and revive decaying suburbs.

No war without vote

IS it right that we go to war without Parliament voting on it? Our new Democracy Task Force will consider whether the centuries-old power of the Royal Prerogative, used by ministers to declare war, sign international treaties and make public appointments,

should be reformed to ensure MPs are consulted first. David Cameron says: "Restoring trust in politics means restoring trust in Parliament and one way to do that is to enhance the role of Parliament in scrutinising the Government's decisions."



Osborne: Warning

Setting in all schools to drive up standards

Dire message from Brown's own backyard

IT'S time to blow the whistle on Gordon Brown's ever-rising tax burden, says Shadow Chancellor George Osborne. Labour has failed to prepare the country for the challenges and opportunities of the new global economy.

Scotland – the Chancellor's own "backyard" – shows what the rest of Britain would be like under Prime Minister Brown.

- Over half of the population wholly dependent on the state for their income;
- A bigger proportion of resources taken by the state than in China;
- Life expectancy in parts of Glasgow lower than life expectancy in the Gaza Strip.

It is not just a poverty of income but a poverty of hope, health and aspiration, says Osborne. It is exactly the wrong response to the new global economy.

"I don't know how much time our Chancellor spends worrying about this any

change EDUCATION

EVERY parent knows that children do best at school when they are engaged at the right level of ability. So David Cameron has called for the introduction of setting in all schools to drive up educational standards.

"Parents know it works, teachers know it works," says Cameron. "Tony Blair promised it in 1997 but it still hasn't happened. We will keep up the pressure until it does."

He slaps down claims by Tony Blair that the Conservatives are preparing policies to restore the 11-plus. Cameron accuses the Prime Minister of seeking to wage a "silly class war" in an attempt to divert attention from his own chronic failure to deliver on education reforms.

"We can all see what the Prime Minister is up to," he says. "In trouble over his education reforms, he is trying to play politics with education by harking back to class war.

"So I had better make it totally clear. Under my leadership there'll be no going back to the nationwide 11-plus.

"I want no child held back, so my priority is not selection by ability between schools, but setting by



Everyone knows setting is right: Cameron watches eager pupils at work

ability within schools, because every parent knows that a high quality education means engaging children at the right level."

Schools are at the top of the agenda with controversy over Tony Blair's planned Education Bill. The Bill – opposed by many Labour backbenchers – puts forward some ideas that the Conservatives have long supported.

Shadow Education Secretary David Willetts says: "Our approach to the Government's education reforms has revealed much about the character of

the Conservative Party today. We want to engage constructively and imaginatively with what matters to millions of parents, rather than just settling for the easy option of automatically opposing everything the Government brings forward.

"Conservatives have consistently fought for more freedom for schools over the past 20 years and we also believe we must give teachers clear and effective disciplinary powers. The Bill should have been bolder, but we believe it can help achieve those

things, so we have backed it.

"Our test has been a very simple one. Could the Education Bill raise the quality of education by increasing the freedom of our schools?"

"Our test is not a political one; it is quite simply what we believe to be in the best interests of the nation's children. That is what responsible Opposition is all about."

Willetts says the battle over education reform highlights many big political questions.

Can Tony Blair really deliver real public service reform? How much authority does he have over his Party now that he has announced his departure?

If he can't ultimately deliver real reform who is better placed to pick up the challenge – Gordon Brown or David Cameron?

TALKS with leading voluntary organisations have been held by David Cameron to help promote his plan for a new Youth Community Action Programme under which teenagers could serve their communities after school and before going on to university or into work.

Cameron says: "I'm ambitious for this programme. Having more people volunteering, especially young people, is good for Britain."

change THE ECONOMY

more. He's too interested in his next job to focus on his current job.

"We hear a lot about the so-called 'Project Gordon.' But the fact is this: Gordon Brown can change his shirts, he can change his ties, he can even change his teeth – but what he really needs to change is the economic policies that are taking Britain in the wrong direction.

"It should be so different. We should be making the most of the opportunities that lie at our feet. We should be setting our sights on becoming the most innovative, the most skilled, and the most competitive and productive and entrepreneurial people in the world.

"Faced with the extraordinary rise of emerging economies like China, India, and Brazil, many European governments seem to have accepted that we will not be able to compete.

"In Britain we are in danger of following their lead. Our Chancellor's response to globalisation is to block much-needed reforms, and give us an ever rising tax burden, and an ever growing welfare state. But that path leads to decline and is wedded to the past."

Shake up police



Working together: David Davis meets the police

change FIGHTING CRIME

TOUGH on crime? Despite spending £11 billion a year on the police, Labour hasn't lived up to that boast. Offences are at historically high levels, while police performance is patchy and arrest and detection levels are low. David Cameron and Shadow Home Secretary David Davis have unveiled plans to improve police performance while halting the centralisation, bureaucracy and political interference that hampers the fight against crime.

"You can't be tough on crime unless you are tough on police reform," says Cameron. "It's time for a fundamental shake-up of policing in this country. Police officers must be made more accountable to local communities. Police pay and conditions must be modernised to ensure much better police performance. And that means, among other things, making it easier to sack bad officers." Conservatives will bring in real local accountability to give communities control over policing, backed by real modernisation giving forces extra responsibility for enforcing the law.

There's a we in politics as well as a me

HOW can we strengthen our society? That is a key issue being considered by the Conservatives' social justice policy group. It is developing plans to empower the voluntary sector, to foster social enterprise, to increase the scope of community action and to encourage neighbourhood revival. David Cameron says: "I want my Party to be one that says, loudly and proudly, that there is such a thing as society – it's just not the same thing as the state. That there's a 'we' in our politics as well as a 'me.' I want us to bring to the fore the Conservative insight that we're stronger, more successful and more fulfilled as individuals, families and communities when we do things together, not separately."

For more information or to join the Party please visit www.conservatives.com

Labour has betrayed the values of precious NHS

change
HEALTH SERVICE

ONE of the greatest gifts we enjoy is our National Health Service, which aims to take care of everyone whatever their needs or their means. It upholds our core belief that the wealthy and the healthy have an enduring duty to look after the poor and the weak.

But the NHS does not belong to one party. To listen to Labour, you'd think they were the sole custodians of this national treasure.

Remember that vote-grabbing stunt by Tony Blair on the eve of the 1997 election? "Twenty-four hours to save the health service," he crowed. How hollow that seems now.

Although spending on the NHS has doubled in real terms since 1997, health care trusts are almost £1 billion in debt. However, the financial crisis is nothing compared to the human misery.

Meltdown

Health economist Professor Nicholas Bosanquet has warned we face the very real prospect of a meltdown in the NHS, with local rationing of healthcare, longer waiting lists, poorer service and falling staff morale.

Across the country, beds, wards and hospitals are being closed as patients pay the price for Blair's failure and his Ministers' incompetence. A survey of NHS bosses reveals that 63 per cent have been forced to close wards and 28 per cent forced to make redundancies.

A hospital in North Staffordshire has had to cut 1,000 jobs – one seventh



Spelling out his concerns for the NHS: David Cameron talks to children's nurses at St Thomas' Hospital, London

of its workforce. At the Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust, 300 jobs are being slashed.

The NHS is the heartbeat of the nation. But Tony Blair has failed to keep his finger on the pulse.

We see all around us the awful consequence: old people kept on trolleys in hospital corridors, expectant mothers shuttled around the country by ambulance and helicopter, queues stretching hundreds of yards when a new dentist comes to town.

And cancer patients told they can't

have the drug that could help them because their postcode doesn't fit.

Bureaucrats even vet people sent to hospital by their GPs to keep them out of hospital as long as possible.

Nowhere is Labour's failure felt more acutely than among the poorest and most vulnerable, the very people the NHS was designed to safeguard. The British Medical Journal says health inequalities are at their widest since Victorian times.

The facts are stark and shaming: an affluent person in Chelsea lives on

average for 82.4 years while a poorer person in central Glasgow will on average live for just 72.9 years. Children in the North have twice the level of tooth decay of those in the South, and two million people are unable to register for NHS dental care because of a shortage of almost 2,000 dentists.

Kick out

The NHS's future workforce is also in crisis. Last year the British Medical Association reported 3,000 junior doctors were unable to find training posts, and trainee nurses are hit by similar problems in Lincolnshire, Shropshire and South Yorkshire.

That is Labour's betrayal of the founding values of the NHS. That is the legacy of Tony Blair.

But do Labour politicians take the blame for this crisis? No! Blair's answer is to kick out the chief executive of the NHS, Sir Nigel Crisp.

David Cameron said in the Commons: "In public, the Prime Minister gives us lists of successes; in private, he knows that things are going wrong and is sacking the chief executive. Isn't this just the latest example of mismanagement in the NHS?"

"When will Ministers take responsibility for their own failures, instead of seeking to blame others?"



Our new faces

DECISIVE steps to increase dramatically the number of women, black and minority ethnic Conservative MPs are already paying off. Some of our new prospective candidates are pictured above.

David Cameron has told the party it must broaden its representation in Parliament to better reflect the country or it won't be half the party it could be. Already it has taken that message to heart.

Six per cent of the Conservative candidates list are black and minority ethnic, compared to eight per cent of the population, and this is set to increase. But the party has a

change
THE PARTY

much stronger appeal to the Indian community than to Afro-Caribbeans or East Asians and is aiming to become more relevant to them, and to those from eastern Europe. Cameron points out that the need for positive action to increase the number of women MPs, MPs from different ethnic backgrounds and MPs with disabilities has nothing to do with "crude political calculation or crazed political correctness – it's

about political effectiveness."

He says: "To create effective policy, we must involve those who are affected by it. How can we possibly meet the hopes and aspirations of people today without a balanced party that reflects their lives and passions?"

"The Conservatives need more women and people from ethnic minorities at all levels in the Party, not only so that we look more like modern Britain, but even more importantly, so that we think like modern Britain.

"Our party knows it must change if we are to make Britain a better place to live. And it has already embraced that challenge."



A mother and a worker

Standing up for mums who work

MOTHERS who work shouldn't be made to feel guilty, nor should mothers who stay at home. Let's stop trying to tell families how to live their lives and instead let's support the lives that families live.

That is the message from Shadow Chancellor George Osborne. He says the party's policies are to provide financial support for families who use childcare, increase the choice of childcare available to parents and protect women who want to be good mothers and have good careers.

The Conservatives reject those who say a woman's place is in the home and we reject those who say all women should work.

Increasingly today, both parents need to work and there is a huge financial cost, estimated at over half a million pounds, to taking time out of work to look after a family.

"Let's be honest," says Osborne, "in the past the Conservatives have given the

change
CHILDCARE

impression young mothers should stay at home. Today Labour gives the impression all young mothers should work.

"Both are wrong. Instead of imposing a choice on mothers, we should support the choices the mothers make for themselves.

"They are constantly juggling the pressures of work and family; relying on relations, friends and neighbours as well as paid carers for childcare; struggling with costs, searching for information about childminders or breakfast clubs or playgroups; and negotiating their way through the complex tax credit system.

"We should provide financial support for the choices that families themselves make; not use financial support as a stick to force parents into a particular choice. Government has a key role in making good childcare affordable.

"I want to make the support provided by the childcare tax credit simpler and much more user-friendly. Then we must expand the range of good, affordable childcare. The Government should not be seeking a monopoly in the provision of childcare or nursery places."

Personals

Optimistic male (39) seeks individuals – any age, gender, race, religion, sexuality or salary. To help realise vision of a stronger society. www.conservatives.com

United Kingdom seeks strong, visionary leader to make life better for all. www.conservatives.com

Bike-riding, energy-saving, recycling dad wishes to meet others who, like him, care passionately about the future of the planet. www.conservatives.com

Wanted: New home for Labour leaders with failing policies. Can u help? www.conservatives.com

For more information or to join the Party please visit www.conservatives.com



**We are a modern,
compassionate
Conservative Party**

.....

Our enduring values mean we believe in trusting people, sharing responsibility, championing freedom and supporting the institutions and culture we share as one nation.

Conservatives are not ideologues. That is why in each generation we change, applying our values to new challenges.

We would love to hear your views. Please take part in our short on line survey by visiting:
conservatives.com/survey

conservatives.com



Built to Last