

fast FORWARD

newsletter of Conservative Way Forward • Leadership Special



Iain Duncan Smith will speak at CWF's Party conference dinner



David Davis is to give the annual Nicholas Ridley Memorial Lecture at Party conference

*forward*VIEW

Until now, the only internal Party election in which Conservative Way Forward has taken a 'corporate' position was that for Conservative candidate for London Mayor. In backing Steve Norris on that occasion, we rowed in behind a candidate who shared our position on Europe but little else. He was, however, not Jeffrey Archer. Subsequent events have vindicated our stance.

We were founded in 1991 to ensure that the vision and values espoused by Margaret Thatcher were carried forward by her successor, John Major. We can claim some success.

In the 1997 race for Party leadership, we did not take sides. Peter Lilley, John Redwood, Michael Howard and William Hague were all good friends of Conservative Way Forward and many of our members were involved in their campaigns.

Similarly, we have, so far, remained neutral in the current leadership election.

Michael Portillo has been a supporter of CWF from our earliest days. In 1996, we even published an anthology of his speeches, edited by Sir George Gardiner, under the title *clear blue water*. Those of you who have

copies are sitting on collectors' items.

David Davis spoke at our recent 'Post-modern Britain' seminar series and will give CWF's Nicholas Ridley Memorial Lecture at this year's Party conference. Our chairman, Eric Forth, was one of his closest lieutenants.

Now, we have a clear choice – between Iain Duncan Smith and Ken Clarke. Our position is unequivocal. We urge our members, friends and fellow-travellers to vote for Iain Duncan Smith when you receive your ballot papers over the next few days.

It is not just that Iain has committed to speak at CWF's Party conference dinner this year, although commercial reality is a principle we tend to abide by. Just get your tickets early.

It is not even that his opponent is not a 'friend' of CWF. Indeed, Ken Clarke has spoken at one of our Party conference fringe events in the past.

The reason is that, in our opinion, Iain Duncan Smith is the only candidate who could unite the Party, whilst learning the lessons of a second disastrous

continued on back page..

www.conwayfor.org www.conwayfor.org www.conwayfor.org

Listening to the silent majority

Eric Forth, chairman of Conservative Way Forward and Member of Parliament for Bromley and Chislehurst, was a leading figure in David Davis' leadership campaign.

Here he outlines how easily he transferred support to Iain Duncan Smith after his candidate withdrew from the race



When William Hague made the shock announcement of his resignation as Party leader on June 8th, I immediately urged my friend and colleague, David Davis, to stand for the leadership. I felt that David offered a superb combination of business and political experience, a capacity for clear policy thinking, a solid family background, and a respect for the role of Parliament in holding government to account. In the end, David was unable to overcome the 'lack of recognition' factor and withdrew, having at least bettered the vote of the chairman of the Party!

I now have no hesitation in supporting Iain Duncan Smith, as does David Davis, for leader of our Party.

I now have no hesitation in

supporting Iain Duncan Smith, as does David Davis, for leader of our Party.

I believe that each of us must consider which of the candidates for leader most closely reflects our own view of politics, is most likely to unite the Party, and can present a new face for the Party for the future.

We cannot, and must not, try to sidestep or fudge the issue of Europe. Our very nationhood is at stake. It is clear that we cannot survive as a true nation if we lose our currency, control of our economy, and the accountability of our political institutions to our own voters.

It seems completely unthinkable that our Party could contemplate as its leader someone whose firmly held views on nationhood, and our relationship with the EU, have more in common with Tony Blair than Conservative Party policy.

Iain Duncan Smith has a clear, principled, consistent view of those matters, which I believe reflects the views of the overwhelming majority of both Conservative Party members and the electorate at large. It seems completely unthinkable that our

Party could contemplate as its leader someone whose firmly held views on nationhood, and our relationship with the EU, have more in common with Tony Blair than Conservative Party policy. So Europe is, and will remain, a crucial issue, even beyond any referendum on the Euro. And how could the Party campaign for a 'No' vote while its leader shared a 'Yes' platform with Labour and the Liberals?

There are many other issues on which we must be prepared to re-assess our policies to ensure that we reconcile our core values and beliefs with the needs of today and tomorrow. Iain Duncan Smith has a refreshingly open mind on how best to provide quality health, education and public transport, involving a blend of public and private provision, whilst maximising individual choice and encouraging personal and family responsibility. These issues will involve difficult decisions to be taken by the leadership in consultation with the Party, inside and outside Parliament, think tanks and legitimate interest groups. Iain is committed to such a process. He wants to ensure that the Party has ownership of our policies,

particularly if they are challenging and controversial - as they often were when Margaret Thatcher led us to three successive election victories.

Iain has already demonstrated his qualities of leadership and determination in a key policy area, namely defence. He took up the issues of the proposed European defence force and the American missile defence system, and positioned us timely and rightly on both matters. Iain gained the confidence of the American defence community and laid the foundations for future relations with our closest ally. Equally, he saw through the pretensions and sham of the European proposals and has created 'clear blue water' in this vital area.

This must not mean the abandonment of our core beliefs and principles - nationhood, individual freedom, the rule of law, low taxation and minimal state intervention.

I believe, as Iain does, that we must be prepared to analyse and understand the reasons for our defeat in 2001, and take whatever action is necessary to respond to it. This must not mean the abandonment of our core beliefs and principles - nationhood, individual freedom, the rule of law, low taxation and minimal state intervention.

It may, however, require us to be bold, radical and even controversial in seeking

contemporary Conservative solutions to today's and tomorrow's challenges. In this context, we must be prepared to consider and learn from the experience of others - whether in Europe or North America.

We must be prepared to challenge our fellow citizens to accept more responsibility for their well-being, in return for diminishing the role of government and driving down the burden of taxation. We must challenge political correctness and the 'blame culture' with determination and confidence, and resist the temptation to pander to single issue interest groups.

We must listen to the 'silent majority'.

Iain has already taken a typically principled, robust stance on a difficult and controversial issue, namely compulsory all-women candidate short lists for political parties. He opposes this, as do I, along with the majority of the Parliamentary Party.

Not only is it insulting and patronising to women - ask Margaret Thatcher - but it undermines the right of constituency associations to choose the best candidate for them. It is one thing to encourage more women to apply - it is unacceptable to impose candidates from the centre on the basis of fashionable political correctness.

I want our Party to be led by someone with whom I feel comfortable, who is willing to listen, and who has minimum 'baggage' from the past.

I want our Party to be led by someone with whom I feel comfortable, who is willing to listen, and who has minimum 'baggage' from the past. I am attracted to a man who has a rare combination of military, business and political experience together with daily experience of the 'real world' in raising a young family in today's demanding social environment.

I rather agree with the Daily Telegraph, when it said of Iain Duncan Smith:

"The Tories need the respectability, personal probity and decency that Iain Duncan Smith projects so well. He is a fundamentally moderate man for whom patriotism and social concern are two sides of the same coin. He is untainted by Tory failures in the 1990s and has an uncomplicated belief in Conservatism and in fighting, not aping, New Labour. He is the only candidate with extensive experience of 'real life'. He is instinctively on the side of the people rather than government."

I look forward to serving as a Conservative Member of Parliament in a Party led by Iain Duncan Smith.

My manifesto

Iain Duncan Smith sets out his agenda for leadership



My aim is simple. It is to serve the British people. It is to put a Conservative Government back into office. This is why I want to be leader of the Conservative Party – and Prime Minister. I believe passionately that the Party and the nation need unity, clear leadership and direction.

Conservative beliefs are rooted in freedom, tolerance, respect for family and love of country. We value hard work and initiative. We regard wealth as a responsibility and an obligation to society. We value freedom and choice above uniformity. To be a Conservative is to recognise that when the state is too powerful, it destroys the will of the people, families and local institutions to care for the old, the sick or less fortunate. The welfare state can never be as generous, as direct or as local as the welfare society.

The Party must become electable again. We must be a credible and effective Opposition, and develop a new approach to public services – ending the ‘ration book’ state that locks people into NHS queues and failing schools.

To be electable, we must be united. Without unity, all our efforts will be wasted. If we want to widen our appeal to disaffected Labour and Liberal voters, first – and above all – we must be united. With clear and honest leadership, we can put the

splits and failures of the past behind us and project the fresh ideas that will restore the unity and purpose of the Party.

The welfare society

Society is changing. To be a Conservative is about using the wisdom of the past for future generations, not about turning the clock back.

During the 1980s and early 1990s, standards of living, and the threat from rising prices and union power preoccupied people. In this new century, however, they are now preoccupied by quality of life, and what they see around them that threatens it.

Fear of crime is destroying our communities. Graffiti, vandalism and violent behaviour are now everywhere. The poor and the vulnerable are the worst affected. People feel they no longer own the streets and the communities they live in.

There is so much to enjoy in modern Britain, but still little sense that we are One Nation. The most fundamental purpose of the Conservative Party remains, even in this new century, to strengthen our society.

The best welfare is provided beyond the state – by families, caring for those they love. The key here is not state action, but action by families, communities and by all the groups and institutions to which people belong.

The Party must again be the party that believes in local accountability, in restoring people’s faith in local institutions and local government. We must learn from the success of Conservatives in local government in recent years.

The Party has historically been the party of volunteering – of compassionate action. We believe in ‘doing your bit’, in giving something back. The state cannot get a lonely young man off drugs, console a wife grieving for her dead husband, or bring practical help to a family overwhelmed by the burdens of

modern life. Only people working together can do that.

This is why, as leader, I would renew our commitment to an Office of Civil Society to create a public champion for the voluntary and charitable sectors, and to encourage a new generation of social entrepreneurs. There is more to public service than the public services. The welfare state is not enough. We need a welfare society.

Britain – a free nation in a free world

The independent nation state remains the cornerstone of accountable government. The Danish rejection of the single currency, the Irish referendum vote against the Nice Treaty and the riots in Stockholm and Genoa are all clear signs of growing unease about the way that important decisions are being removed from national democratic control. People in Britain are worried about the loss of power to Brussels.

We need free trade and co-operation in Europe, but Britain does not need or want the single currency, the Euro Army and European Government. Britain should promote a wider, more flexible European Union. The EU should serve the nations of Europe, not the nations serve the EU.

My policy on the single currency is both clear and tolerant. The party will oppose scrapping the pound and will campaign against the single currency in a referendum. I will be tolerant of those who support the single currency. Those in the minority who are in favour of the single currency can serve in the Shadow Cabinet – when the referendum comes, they can temporarily step down if they want to join the ‘Yes’ campaign.

Britain also needs to look beyond Europe. We are a successful global trading nation. As a free-trading, outward-looking nation, we have a stake in the whole global economy. In particular, I want to develop our strong economic, social and cultural links across the Atlantic and globally.

Britain should join with her allies to protect the world from unstable states obtaining weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, which over the next few years will pose a greater threat to peace and stability around the world – both to UK forces abroad and to Britain and its neighbours at home.

Rewarding hard work and saving

Labour does not just threaten Britain with the failing European single currency – they are smothering our economy with a blanket of regulation and business taxation. Serious imbalances are emerging – a ballooning trade deficit, a slow-down in manufacturing, a massive decline in the rate of savings and government spending which is growing faster than the economy can afford.

Labour have forced millions of pensioners into the misery of means-tested benefits and taxed the pension funds of those who work. Small businesses are drowning in a sea of new taxes and regulation. They must be free to provide higher living standards for employees and their families.

I am committed to keeping the Pound sterling. I will also encourage enterprise and investment, only spend what the nation can afford and reduce the burden of tax. These Conservative policies are proven to create economic stability and success throughout the world.

Caring for our environment

Conservatism and conservation go together. Just as Conservatives preserve and nurture the best in our society, so we must preserve our natural heritage and the future of our planet.

This should be the most natural political territory for Conservatives – everything from the disposal of household waste through the preservation of our green fields to global warming, planning, housing, transport and maintaining the rural way of life.

But governments must work with, and have faith in, people – farmers who manage our countryside, businesses and every householder. We should align people's best interests with their self-interest.

Renewable energy is key to the future. I have proposed tax breaks to promote the installation of solar cells on the roofs of homes and other buildings to generate electricity. Every home should have them, just as they have a fridge and an immersion heater.

Many people, young and old alike, feel strongly about the environment and want an opportunity to take action. Conservatives must renew our commitment to our natural desire to preserve and improve our environment, inspiring a new generation to participate in mainstream politics.

Public service beyond the state

Britain's public services need fundamental change. Voters are disillusioned with Labour's broken promises on schools and hospitals. Britain needs a new approach to public services which is not just about the state.

Conservatives need to challenge Labour's 'ration book' state, which traps people in hospital queues and failing schools. We must offer the choice and quality that people expect in every other area of life.

This means far more than just increasing public spending. We are almost the only country in the developed world where health care is solely a matter for the state – no wonder the NHS is in crisis. Yet the best nursing homes and hospices are not run by the state. My approach will give people freedom and choice to escape from Labour's health queues.

In my own constituency, I have witnessed the despair that parents face when they discover that the only school their children are allowed to go to by the local council is a failing 'sink school'. For too long, Conservatives have had little or nothing to offer those parents. We should look to propose a new system of education credits so parents of children trapped in failing schools can choose a different school for their children.

Beyond that, we should try to take the politics out of schooling by giving schools greater control over their budgets and how they are run. Good citizenship starts at school, and Conservatives should restore the authority of teachers. Schools should have the power to oblige parents to support the work of teachers through binding 'school contracts'.

Britain should not be too proud to learn from our continental neighbours, whose independent, voluntary and charitable providers play a part in delivering better schools and hospitals than we have here.

Services must remain free at the point of use, but the time has come to admit that state monopoly services are failing. The state, the market and the voluntary sector should work together for the common good.

Renewing our Party

We won't be able to turn our ideals into practice without effective campaigns, proper funding, top-quality research, and more membership involvement – in other words, without party reform.

I do not want to embark upon another major structural reform. Instead, I have three main aims.

First, I want to re-engage with the voluntary party. Our policy review and campaign planning needs the energetic and expert input of our members and local councillors. The review needs to be not a one-off exercise, but a continuous process during the run-up to the next election.

Second, I want to improve the regional co-ordination of our resources, including the status and training of our agents and staff, and to ensure that we have the right balance of candidates. I would like to see more women and ethnic minority candidates being selected, especially for winnable seats. I am determined that the Conservative Party must come to look more like the country it wants to govern.

Third, I want to attack the Liberal Democrats. It is a mistake to try to ignore them. We need to have candidates in place to fight them by the end of next year, to learn from councillors and candidates who have ousted Liberal Democrats, and to create a new unit at Conservative Central Office to spearhead the fight against them.

This brief manifesto sets out how I will build on these core beliefs as party leader. It shows how our party can reach out to 21st century Britain. If we show courage, Conservatives can occupy the common ground of British politics and inspire a new generation of voters.

This is why I am asking for your vote in this leadership election.

Not readily pigeonholed

John Bercow, Member of Parliament for Buckingham and frontbench spokesman on Home Affairs, was a prominent supporter of Michael Portillo. Here he explains how his 'modernising' views can be reconciled with support for Iain Duncan Smith.



Michael Portillo has understood better, and for longer, than any other prominent Conservative, the scale of public disaffection with our Party. He sees that we face a major challenge to reconnect with the voters by identifying with their concerns and proving that we Conservatives want to govern Britain as she is, not as she was.

That is why I backed Michael for the leadership. Sadly, too few colleagues favoured him; but we still have a choice between Ken Clarke and Iain Duncan Smith. I shall support Iain.

“So you have now ditched Portillo’s agenda and you agree with everything Iain Duncan Smith says, is that it?” I have not, I do not and it is not. I believe in free markets, a progressive social outlook and self-government of the United Kingdom.

Ken would dub me as a Eurosceptic head-banger and Iain could view me as a dangerous liberal.

There is a sense in which I am not readily pigeonholed as a ‘Clarke-ite’ or a ‘Duncan Smith-ite’. Ken would dub me as a Eurosceptic head-banger and Iain could view me as a dangerous liberal. In fact, I am a modern Conservative who wants our Party back in office to stop the damage wrought by New Labour and to apply our core principles across the field of public policy.

The new leader must both unite the Party and appeal to the country. Each of those conditions is necessary; neither on its own is sufficient.

This prompts the obvious question: “How do we win and pursue a credible programme for Britain?” The new leader must both unite the Party and appeal to the country. Each of those conditions is necessary; neither on its own is sufficient.

Ken has formidable strengths. He is popular, experienced, straight-talking and, at his best, effective in Parliament and the media alike. As a special adviser at the Treasury when Ken was Chancellor, I came to like and respect him.

Yet, on the flip side of the coin, there are serious negatives. As a Minister, he made many enemies amongst doctors, teachers and the police, and it is not clear that we made big policy gains from the fights he picked.

Even more seriously, Ken is at loggerheads with most of the Party and the country in his

support for increased European government.

It is devilishly difficult to see how he can unite the Party when he sides with Labour on the most important issue to face this country since we joined the EEC.

Every candidate in this election has stressed that we must not be obsessed with Europe to the exclusion of issues of daily concern to voters. There is no future for us as a single-issue pressure group. Yet the irony is that having said at the start of his campaign launch that we should stop banging on about Europe, Ken has spoken of little else.

If he tries to force the Party to support more powers for the EU and the new European army, many of us will refuse to do so.

The danger is that his leadership could prove to be a recipe for institutionalised conflict amongst Conservatives. If he tries to force the Party to support more powers for the EU and the new European army, many of us will refuse to do so.

Even if he back-pedals on these subjects, there is ample scope for Labour to bring forward European issues on a weekly basis to create divisions in our ranks. If that happened, any poll boost achieved by Ken would quickly be reversed.

Iain can unite the Party because he speaks for the vast majority in supporting national self-government and opposing further European integration. Together with such clarity, he offers tolerance to the minority of Conservatives who want to scrap the Pound and cede more powers to the EU.

His decisiveness on Europe will allow him, and us, to concentrate far more on the bread-and-butter issues which the public expects us to address. How can we treat the sickest patients more quickly and provide adequately for our growing elderly population? How can we raise standards in education and empower parents to act if the system fails their children? How can we deliver quality public transport which arrives on time at a price we can afford? How can we free the police to wage war on violent crime and ensure that law-abiding citizens are not harassed? How can we safeguard the environment by giving people and businesses the incentive to respect it? On all of these public service issues, Iain is examining serious alternatives and is eager to learn from the successes of our continental neighbours.

As a party, we have failed disastrously to appeal to the ethnic minorities. Though many black and Asian Britons would endorse Conservative values, they often think we are hostile and racist.

That is not their fault – it is ours. We must reach out to those people and show that we value them as equal citizens and want a chance to serve them. Iain made real efforts as a candidate in Bradford fourteen years ago to build links with those communities and it will be a priority for him if he is elected.

No subject should be or will be off limits in the serious debate which is essential for the revival of our Party.

No one, least of all Iain, would pretend that he is a social liberal. Yet, as an intelligent and thoughtful man, he knows full well that we must respect sexual minorities. Equally, we should clearly oppose discrimination against women – the majority – and, with open minds, re-examine our approach to the war on drugs. No subject should be or will be off limits in the serious debate which is essential for the revival of our Party.

The word ‘charisma’ is probably uttered more frequently than any other in connection with the leadership. It matters, but it is not the Holy Grail. Strength of purpose, character, judgement and the capacity to motivate are vital.

Iain used those qualities in the Army and in business – and they stand him in good stead now. The British have an admirable sense of fair play. Over the last four years they have given Labour the benefit of the doubt. As Government failures multiply, the public’s patience will be stretched. The saccharine smugness of Blair and his cronies will infuriate millions who want to see results, not to be force fed on a diet of spin and statistics.

In an age of cynicism about politicians who are out for themselves, Iain represents a different breed. He did not come into politics to be someone, but to do something for his fellow citizens. He can and he should. Let us give him the chance to lead the fight against Labour and the Liberal Democrats, to restore the fortunes of our Party and to offer a better future for our country.

forwardVIEW

...continued from front page

election result, and move it forward. Ken Clarke is a return to the past. It is not just Europe. Ken Clarke was close to being a disastrous Health Secretary, Education Secretary and Home Secretary. He managed, almost single-handedly, to alienate doctors, teachers and even the Police without securing any long-lasting transformation of the health service, education, or crime. His 'success' as Chancellor was built on the foundations of Norman Lamont's post-Exchange Rate Mechanism policies. And yet he will campaign for our entry into an immortal version of ERM, probably on the same platform as Tony Blair and Charles Kennedy, against the wishes of the vast majority of Conservative Party members.

It is his 'robust' debating style and 'blokishness' that supposedly makes him attractive to electors. But they are also key factors in a personality which seems to delight in causing offence to so many people (see doctors, teachers and policemen above). Anyone with

judgement, seeking to lead the Party at this difficult time, would not start off by calling those with a principled position on Europe, 'headbangers'. He later referred to those taking the principled position of opposing Ken Clarke as leader as 'zealots'. We do not know where 'zealot' sits in relation to 'headbanger' in the Clarke lexicon of abuse.

Iain Duncan Smith, by contrast, is standing for an inclusive and open Party, where there are no 'sacred cows', and recognising that change must happen, but not at the risk of losing our core Conservative principle locus. He will be tolerant of minority views, within the Party as well as outside, unlike Ken Clarke who is seemingly intolerant of the majority.

We want, we need, a leader who will bind the Party in its common values and build a platform to attract back the millions of Conservative voters lost since the election victories of Margaret Thatcher. That leader is Iain Duncan Smith.

Conservative Way Forward Our principles:

Nationhood each nation must be free to determine its policies to the benefit of its citizens. **Freedom** for responsible individuals, guaranteed by the rule of law administered by an independent judiciary and minimal state activity. **Democracy** the exercise of political power, with the consent of the people, through regular elections on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot. **Security** the first duty of the state is to provide external and internal defence of the citizenry. **Community** defined by geography, traditional inheritance and sense of identity. **Capitalism** the most effective system of wealth creation. Free markets are blind to gender, race, class or religion. **Choice** for individuals must be maximised, even if the state accepts responsibility for provision of a safety net. **Enterprise** fostered by a low tax, low inflation economy, with currency exchange rates determined by the free market. **Deregulation** domestic and global - to maximise freedom of choice and individual responsibility in an improved society.

CONSERVATIVE WAY FORWARD

PO Box 563, Watford WD17 3GZ
www.conwayfor.org

President

Rt Hon. Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven

Chairman

Rt Hon. Eric Forth MP

Vice Presidents

Rt Hon. Lord Parkinson of Carnforth
Rt Hon. Lord Tebbit of Chingford

Editor, fastForward

John Swannick

Articles are published in fastForward as a contribution to debate and do not necessarily reflect the views of Conservative Way Forward or its officers.

© Conservative Way Forward, 2001.