

CONSERVATIVE AND UNIONIST CENTRAL OFFICE

RELEASE TIME

5315

20.30 hours/5 Dec. 55

PLEASE CHECK CAREFULLY FOR ANY DEVIATION IN DELIVERY

Text of a speech by The Rt. Hon. Sir WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, K.G., O.M., C.H., D.L., M.P., (Woodford, Essex), at a Young Conservative Rally at Woodford Green, on Monday, 5th December, 1955.

The ten eventful years since the war have seen a remarkable resurgence of the Conservative Party on the foundation of universal suffrage. In this nothing has been so important, or so encouraging for the future, as the great accession of strength we have received from the growth and expansion of the Young Conservative Movement.

For many years our opponents claimed to be the party of youth and the future. It is only too true that earlier generations of young people were misled by the chimeras of Socialism, and mistakenly believed that it offered the best prospects for their country and the world.

Since the war we have seen Socialism in practice. The practice proved a lot less attractive than the theory. As the fallacies of Socialist theory became apparent more and more young people turned with growing hope and conviction to the Conservative Party. The Young Conservative Movement has grown at a remarkable pace, and today its membership of 150,000 makes it the largest movement of its kind in the free world.

This splendid body of eager and alert youth played a worthy part in removing the Socialist Government from office, and in securing a Conservative victory at the polls in two successive elections.

It is good to learn, too, that your movement is showing no signs of resting on its laurels after these solid achievements. Since the election last May more than 50 new branches have been formed. That is a most hopeful sign. Our opponents may well
/envy

envy us this growing and sustained support from the rising generation. In the House of Commons we have nearly three times as many Members under 40 as sit on the Opposition benches, and in the party organisations up and down the country they suffer from the same lack of younger workers.

At their last annual conference at Margate the Socialists spent a good deal of time in bemoaning the absence of young blood in their movement. The absence is so marked that they have even decided to wind up the Labour League of Youth.

Let us then rejoice at the evidence that the principles of Tory democracy appeal to youth with ever growing power. They appeal because they strike a chord in the breast of every man and woman who puts country first. Our strength springs from the fact that we are a party which serves no class or section. We put the nation first.

There are many reasons why the Socialists have failed to attract youth. Today after more than four years in opposition they still have no policy, no message to give the country, on any of the big issues of the day. Nationalisation of all the means of production, distribution and exchange was long proclaimed by the Socialist Party as the foundation of their movement. It is certainly the sole practical way in which they could put Socialism into force. But now they are not sure of a single important industry which they would nationalise if they had the power.

They hope they will be able to settle their differences, and work out a policy during the next three or four years, in time for the next election. Meantime, they occupy themselves in petty fault-finding about day to day affairs in the hopes of finding something that will give them a good war cry. But there will not be an election for three or four years and

no one can tell what we shall be talking about then. "We must go back to the classroom" one of their leaders, Mr. James Griffiths, has stated. Well, I don't suppose you want to go back to the classroom with them. Some of you haven't long left it, and now you want to venture out into an expanding future. You have had the advantage of seeing the two rival theories at work in recent years. We had six years of Socialist control, with its shortages, and queues, rationing and austerity and three major financial and economic crises.

Abroad we saw a weakening of our position in the world, and a sad decline from the heights to which, thanks to the valour and determination of our people, we had climbed in 1945.

Since our Conservative policy of national growth was given a chance to work four years ago, there has been a marked improvement in our affairs and prospects. Production has risen, and our general living standards have improved. Shortages have largely disappeared and rationing is not only abolished but forgotten. Nor have any of the fears our opponents professed to entertain been realised. Employment has reached new peaks this year and unemployment has been the lowest ever recorded in peacetime. No savage axe has been wielded against the social services: on the contrary they have been expanded and improved. Wages have risen faster than prices. We are undoubtedly as a nation better fed, better housed and better off in most material ways than we have ever been.

Who can doubt that the country has chosen wisely between the two roads presented to it? Along one road lay the Socialist State, with all-powerful officials deciding increasingly how everybody shall live, and spending more of what everybody earns. As the State counts for more, the individual man and woman counts for less. On the other road, the Conservative road, the goal is a free life in which there is growing opportunity for the able, and growing protection for the weak and unfortunate. We seek a life in which everybody is encouraged to earn more and keep more of what is earned: a life in which living standards rise as production rises: and in which more of us can take pride in ownership, and in our working lives enjoy a pride in partnership.

/Nobody should

Nobody should be in any doubt that progress can be sustained only by continuing exertions and by every use of ingenuity and adventurous enterprise. The world outside does not owe us a living. We have to earn it, and earn it in a fiercely competitive world. There never has been a nation like ours, densely populated, unable to feed itself from its own resources, but keeping alive by trade and industry and winning for itself a standard of living such as few other countries enjoy. In no other great country in the world would the penalty of failure to earn that livelihood be as heavy or far-reaching.

I am firmly convinced that the one hope of success lies in the quality and native genius of our island race. We must give full scope to the spirit of adventure, adaptability, enterprise, hard work and contrivance which brought us to a commanding position in the world, and which alone can retain it for us.

We have had some reminders this year of the precarious foundations of our existence. Once again our imports have tended to outstrip our exports, there has been a drain on our resources, and measures have been necessary to reduce and limit our home demand on materials and manpower. These measures have not been popular. It will be an ill day when a Conservative Government shrinks from doing right out of any consideration of electoral popularity or favour. Gallup polls no doubt have their proper place in our modern life, but popularity or unpopularity are poor guides to conduct.

From time to time restraint is needed. We must certainly never allow our hard-won prosperity to force up our prices and costs so that our goods cannot compete with those of other countries in world markets. That would be fatal to every hope we cherish for the future.

/To realise

To realise those hopes the Conservative Party puts its faith in expansion, not restriction. If our country faces problems it also has great opportunities. We live in a rapidly expanding age of new discovery, exciting days when the power of science is opening up new vistas of infinite possibility. To seize these chances, to lead the world in the new industrial revolution as we did in the earlier one, is a task for youth.

I have no doubt you have all been following the exhibition which the heads of the Russian State have been making of their tour through India and Burma. ^{32A} It has certainly been a surprising spectacle, and one which Her Majesty's Government will no doubt study carefully before they allow it, with suitable variants, to be repeated here. (Lampson) But the behaviour of their leader must not lead us to suppose that Russian power and capacity is not growing in many other directions. 48ft

I will take only one example tonight - technological education. This is an all-important subject in which Great Britain has allowed herself to fall behind. We are already surpassed by Russia on a scale which is most alarming. In the last ten years the Soviet higher technical education for mechanical engineering has been developed both in numbers and in quality to an extent which far exceeds anything we have achieved. This is a matter which needs the immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government. 40ft 153 ft

It is very fitting that I should talk to the young men and girls I see before me upon it. The Ministry of Education has hitherto relied upon the universities and they have no doubt done their best, but large technical schools should immediately be founded and brought into full and active life if we are - not to keep abreast, but even to maintain - our

/proportionate

proportionate place in the world.

We live in an age of mechanisation. Not only do mechanics relieve the body of its labours, but they relieve the mind. Machines can be got which will add up and multiply at a rate and on a scale we could not have been taught at school. I am all for your using machines, but do not let them use you.

We had a debate in Parliament last week about television and whether it should be prevented from anticipating debates impending in the House of Commons. [The House of Commons thought not, and I think they were right. But, it is asked, what about free speech? I am all for free speech. I am all for a state of affairs where every man and woman should form his own opinion and express the same to as many as care to listen. But that is quite a different thing to a man getting hold of an instrument and talking, as he could do in this country, to 15,000,000 people on the particular topics which the House of Commons has indicated that it is going to discuss. Who is going to give this man access to the instrument of such superhuman power? Surely that is a matter which wants looking into before we accord to anyone such an extraordinary multiplication of human power. The House of Commons has been fully justified in taking its time over this, and not allowing its authority to be weakened.]

Part, perhaps the largest part, of the secret of our country's enduring greatness has been our gift of ensuring the continuity of our island life, of changing with the age while still remaining true to the spirit of the ages. Let our aim continue to be to preserve the inheritance our fathers bequeathed to us, and upon the firm and strong foundations of the past to build for the years to come.

High tasks await you. History and geography alike have laid upon us special responsibilities and have given us

/a place

a place still unique in the world.

[We have close ties and associations with the British Empire and Commonwealth, with the Atlantic community and the English-speaking world, and with the continent of Europe. To rise to the full opportunity this gives us we must be solvent and economically strong, faithfully and resolutely earning our own living by the sweat of our brow, and the exertion of our ~~minds~~ *brains* .

We must make our full contribution to the united strength of the free nations upon which peace depends, and we must develop the resources, and raise the living standards of the Commonwealth and Empire.

You will, I am confident, be equal to your opportunity.]

END