



T H E M E S

We do not believe that strong political themes - and the phrases and slogans that grow out of them - can be constructed in mid-air. They must flow from a single, fundamental message which is itself based on analysis of the present political situation and the mood of the people.

In our discussions we kept coming back to the phenomenon of the Jubilee: the extraordinary manifestation of unity in celebration; the orderliness of it all; the friendliness and affection shown towards the Queen; the way in which the whole concept seemed to transcend in everyone's mind the problems and discords of our society.

Three things seem to us to emerge:

- 1) That people passionately welcomed an occasion for national pride and national unity, when both had seemed to be at a discount.
- 2) That the Monarch provided a symbol of continuity - a familiar and respected institution in a bewilderingly changing world.
- 3) That this was felt to be one institution that worked - doing its job efficiently, making no demands, making no high-flown promises, above politics.

We believe people are fed up with change, and with new systems that don't work. There is a deep nostalgia, in part for what is thought of as a comfortable past, but chiefly for a settled, civilised life. Continuity is vital, and that is in tune with a Conservative approach.

This leads us to believe that we must be very careful how we handle 'Time for a Change' as a theme. Obviously every Opposition, at every election, is calling for 'a change' - of Government. Most people (we hope) want what we are seeking a a major change of trend and style of government - but not a great radical upheaval based on promises of a Brave New World. People no longer believe politicians' promises of better times ahead and the benefits of 'change'. Of course we know we shall have to change many things, but this should be implicit rather than explicit in our presentation.

The conventional wisdom is that we must always appear forward-looking, never backward-looking. We think that at this moment the conventional wisdom may be wrong. The 'change' that people want today is much more a change back to known standards than a leap forward into the unknown.

People will be more attracted by a promise - backed by sensible practical proposals - to restore some of the valued things they have lost than by promises of a vague, bright tomorrow.

These include a sound currency, living standards, jobs, law and order and physical safety, sound educational standards, freedom from bureaucratic interference, etc. - to say nothing of national pride and a sense of common purpose.

People would welcome a return to settled values and more predictable prospects. (Compare record of 17 Conservative years and 17 Labour years.)

THE FIRST STEPS

1) Fear is more potent than hope. So the first step is to make clear the threat that under Labour still more will be lost. Under Labour governments, it's an accelerating and never-ending

process. Institutions and values are questioned and threatened now which looked rock-solid even five years ago. In another five years all could be lost. 1984 indeed!

An exposure campaign is essential, based on the whole 'lawless Labour' story (culminating in the Black List) and on the threats in 'Labour's Programme'.

STOP THEM (SACK THEM?) BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

ANOTHER LABOUR GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE US TO 1984

(metaphorically as well as literally. Most of us - not all - believe '1984' does ring a bell with most people - as something 'bad'!

2) We have to destroy the Labour proposition that it is mild and moderate under benign Callaghan.

Callaghan is a temporary, expendable front-man (and of course, there's no harm in showing that he is, and always has been, a twister as well). There is a real danger that he (even if dis-trusted) may appear as a symbol of continuity, while our leader will seem new and untried by comparison. This needs to be worked at.

3) But behind Callaghan is the Socialist reality - lust for the unbridled power of the one-party State, black hatred of everything that stands in its way, contempt for the Law, the Constitution and the rights of the individual.

Can we prove this? Yes.

Why do they want to sack judges whose decisions they don't like? Cut the Army? Abolish the House of Lords? Sub-ordinate the freedom of the Press to union dictation?

Because they want to destroy or clamp political control on any and every institution or independent source of influence in a free society which might threaten the power of the one-party State. And they will cheat, and they will change, break or bend the law to do it.

Wherever there is independence, wherever there is a chance for the individual, the family or the small firm to stand outside the corporate scheme of things, Labour and its union allies will be down on it like a ton of bricks.

People want a secure and ordered society, but not to be slotted into the corporate structure by authority. They want to choose their own slots.

'MEMORIES'

People vote at General Elections on the stored memories of the whole period of office of the outgoing Government.

We have to get them to the polls remembering the horrors of 1974-77 rather than by any current improvement. The Australian 'Memories' technique is the one - relying on old newspaper headlines, etc., to remind them, rather than on Conservative politicians telling them.

Memories of 30% inflation, 15% interest rates, plummeting £, Healey's absurd promises that all would be well 'next year'.

At the same time, rub it in that Labour's present 'moderation', tax cuts and so on are just the Election soft soap and that their own policies promise a return to 1974 if they win - and then on to 1984. They are trying to fight this Election on the opposite of their 1974 policies - in fact, on our policies. But they don't mean it. Labour wants to cover up. We believe in wide open discussion of major issues which concern people - immigration, power of unions, etc.

THE ALTERNATIVE

Having loosened people's attachment to the present Labour programme, we proceed to our own constructive alternative.

This positive message can arise quite naturally and smoothly out of the negative description of what is wrong under Labour. As we destroy the Socialist aims and claims, we emphasise the alternatives.

THE NATION, NOT THE STATE

People can identify with, and be proud of, their Nation - but not the State. The State is a lot of Socialist politicians and 'faceless bureaucrats', hungry for power, to tell us what is good for us.

'They're after your home, your savings, your pension, even your bank balance'.

'Nationalised British Steel loses £500m. of your money a year. Do you want the same people to run your bank, your insurance company, your friendly local builder?'

We believe in independence, ownership and responsibility.

WHERE NOBODY CAME, NOBODY CARES.

'State responsibility means personal irresponsibility'. No need to work, no need to care for one's family, no need to respect other people's rights or property.

Only independent, responsible people with a stake in the country can make a Nation to be proud of. (And people need something to be proud of.)

Patriotism is potentially a good line, but it needs a rather special Ditraclian panache if it is not to sound hollow and ridiculous. However, we should try to restore some pride in our history. The Nation has been damaged by the vandalizing of its so-called 'bourgeois' cultures and mocking of its so-called 'middle-

class' values and the denigration of its 'colonialist' history. Let's stop apologising for our history! We have much more cause for pride than for shame.

Defence may have some potential. The independent nuclear deterrent did strike a chord in the late 1950s and early 1960s. People dislike the feeling of national impotence. We must show that strong defences could really matter - that it is humiliating for Britons to rely solely on Yanks, Frogs and Krauts for their survival. We must do our fair share.

The Army is now popular (N. Ireland, firemen's strike). Running down and underpaying soldiers is thought to be bad.

Has the E.E.C. made patriotism and national pride irrelevant? We must show that it hasn't. There is one good rocket to aim at the Labour Left:

'THEY WANT BRITAIN OUT OF WESTERN EUROPE - THEY WANT US IN EASTERN EUROPE'.

STOP MESSING US ABOUT!

We are not keen on 'Freedom' as a great philosophical theme. 'Stop messing us about' is much nearer home.

The citizen is being prevented (by the State) from helping himself and helping the Nation. Prevented from creating wealth, or robbed of much of what he does create for the benefit of the non-creators. Bossed about by Government, councils, boards, inspectors, tax-men and trade union bosses.

The Government should do its own job properly (defence, protection of person and property, etc.) and we will do ours.

GET OFF OUR BACKS!

What is a Government for? Question priorities of Government spending. Ever growing power over citizen with growing inability to defend him against criminals, etc. Taxing potential wealth-creators to prop up dead or dying firms. Cash for less-making direct-labour rather than help for home buyers. Money for African terrorists but not for British soldiers and police.

Attack on bureaucracy, controls, interference and bullying trade union autocrats.

MORE CHOICE

'Capitalism' is not a good word, and we do not think even 'Free Enterprise' rings many bells. The word 'free' has been devalued ('free Health Service', 'with every packet a free plastic glove').

'More Choice' is better. 'We choose to prosper and prosper to choose'.

Choice between those who must serve you well or go bust and those who exist to run something as an end in itself - with losses guaranteed out of your pockets. This takes in the whole Small Businesses and Competition arguments. (Note: Competition is only popular when it cuts prices in the shops!)

Dispersed ownership is both a bulwark against State power and a guarantee of competition and free choice. More choice (of job) for the worker, as well as (of product or service) for the consumer.

MAKE IT WORTH WHILE

'Incentives' is not a good word. 'Make it worth while'

is the message. Worth while to work, save, create wealth and transmit it, to look after our own families rather than dump them on Welfare.

A right (and the ability) to do these things is real 'freedom'.

LAWLESS LABOUR

The Law is the only guarantor of this freedom and this right.

'Lawless Labour' twists the Law to its own centralising ends.

It uses the Law to oppress when it is on Labour's side; but it will change it, bend it or break it when it stands in the way. Labour has no feeling for the spirit of the Law. (Selective law-breaking. Clay Cross. 'Violence is justified'.)

The Law exists to protect the citizen against excessive power - by the State, by big unions, by violent criminals. We must restore its functions. But - a law-abiding society can be founded only on personal responsibility.

Labour makes it pay to break the law (amnesties for illegal immigrants, etc.). And Labour's attacks on property encourage crime.

COMMON SENSE

All these things make sense to ordinary people, who feel that common sense is disappearing.

LET'S GET BACK TO COMMON SENSE - in taxation, in social security, in punishment, education and the rest. (Note that it is 'back' to common sense.)

SUMMARY

The following 'themes', then, seem to us to emerge, with 'LET'S GET BACK TO COMMON SENSE!' running through and summing up all of them:-

- 1) The destructive, 'exposure' phase. 'You know Labour Government doesn't work'. It doesn't make sense. Look what has been lost. Let's get back to Common Sense.
- 2) The Nation, not the State. Let's have something to be proud of. Britain is too good for Socialism, and her people deserve a better chance than to drift towards the East European State. Independence, ownership and responsibility. The State means more nationalisation.
- 3) 'Stop messing us about' and 'Get off our backs!'. Let the Government do its real job properly and let us do ours.
- 4) 'More choices'.
- 5) 'Make it worth while!' Let's get back to common sense.
- 6) 'Lawless Labour'. It makes crime pay. Power over the citizen, but no protection for the citizen. Labour bends the Law, which is the citizen's only real protection. Labour cheats!
- 7) Again, and above all, 'Let's Get Back to Common Sense!'

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POSTSCRIPT

We have tried not to refine phrases and slogans. This is a job for advertising experts. We have thrown up a few ideas for processing. Here are two more:-

PUT RIGHT WHAT'S LEFT

NORTH SEA OIL IS BRITAIN'S CHANCE - DON'T LET LABOUR SPOIL IT!

Words are important.

Call our opponents 'Labour', not 'Socialists', since this is the name they campaign under. Try to turn their own name against them - 'Hard Labour', 'Wasted Labour', etc.

Call ourselves 'Conservatives', rather than 'Tories', which is a dirty word with swinging voters in Labour areas. Make the word sound reassuring (Conservation, tradition?)

Talk about 'Labour's Programme', not 'Labour's Programme, 1976'.

When those are agreed, all colleagues must use the same words, to say the same things. We must get it right now, with no last-minute search for slogans.

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