

ENTERPRISE

Enterprise is an individual quality. It is a part of our faith that we are all unique individuals, each with some talent that we can use to influence our future.

Yet one of the peculiarities of Britain - one rarely finds it elsewhere - is the fact that a significant number of people who are living successful lives feel, or are made to feel, guilty.

The socialist era in our national life, the era when socialist ideas influenced and at time dominated our national agenda, is passing into history.

Yet certain attitudes linger on like emotional monuments to a dead creed. One of them rests on a profound fallacy - the belief that one can only prosper at the expense of someone else.

In truth, the desire to improve one's life and that of one's family is the motivating force behind the creation of wealth.

And wealth has to be created; it does not exist in nature. \

It is the human mind - nothing else - that creates the technology which gives economic value to oil, coal and all other natural resources. They've been lying there for thousands of years. It is from wealth thus created that we all benefit.

Those who seek to improve their material lives, according to their ability and opportunity, are the motors who drive our economy forward.

We did not build the greatest empire the world has ever seen; or pioneer the agricultural and industrial revolutions; or repeatedly deter tyrants who aimed to destroy us; we did not achieve all these things because someone told us to do so.

It was great individuals - brave explorers, inspired inventors, shrewd businessmen, skilled craftsmen and conscientious workers - who made this country great.

And it is such individuals who <sup>are doing?</sup> ~~will do~~ so again - if government will create the conditions in which they can operate.

Today we enjoy a standard of prosperity undreamed of by our grandparents. But life is about more than material prosperity. It's how you use it that counts.

Our Victorian capitalists have had a bad press from historians who never knew the harsh realities of the world as a market place. Yet how many of the amenities of our towns and cities - the parks and public gardens, the libraries and art galleries, the churches and schools - had their origin in the private philanthropy of men who, having made good themselves, wanted to do good for others?

It is that spirit we are recapturing the civilised notion of individual obligation to the wider community.

Monday evening

EDUCATION

We do not believe that the Government can be, or should be, the only provider. If we want to improve our education, our housing, our cities, we have to use Government to mobilise private initiative and energy, We need more flexibility. Not less. Less bureaucracy, not more. Some of the energy which is revitalised our economy has to be channelled into regenerating our social policies.

In particular, I want education to be part of the answer to Britain's problems, not one of the causes.

To compete more successfully in tomorrow's world - with Japan and Germany, with the United States and the newly emerging countries of the Pacific - we shall need a well-educated, well-trained, creative, fast-thinking workforce. Few things are more alarming for the future

of this country than the international comparisons that have been made of mathematical attainment among young people in Britain and abroad. If our education is backward today, our national performance will be backward tomorrow.

Yet it is the plight of individual boys and girls which most worries me. Too often, our children do not get the education they deserve ~~and need.~~

In the last few years, we have seen another disadvantage heaped on the shoulders of those youngsters in our inner cities who should be helped by their education to escape into a better future. Extremist education authorities and extremist teachers have compounded those disadvantages.

They have failed to give those young people the start in life they need.

Children who needed to be able to count and multiply and operate a computer keyboard have learned non-racist mathematics, whatever that may be.

Children who needed to be able to express themselves orally, and in writing, in clear English have been taught political slogans.

Children who needed to be taught to respect the values of life have been taught their inalienable right to be gay.

Those children have been cheated of their just claim to a sound start in life.

For too many of our young, we have tolerated the second or third best. Of course, there are across the whole of the country plenty of excellent teachers and successful schools. Indeed, every good school, and every good teacher, is a reminder of what too many young people are denied.

So I believe that our most important task in this Parliament is to raise the quality of education in our schools.

First, by establishing a National Core Curriculum. This will set standards which pupils will be expected to achieve in English, maths and science. Progress will be tested at every stage so that parents, and the children themselves, can see how well they are doing and where additional help may be needed.





Until now there has been too little choice in education. It has been limited to a small number of assisted places in the private sector or, for the overwhelming majority, schools substantially run by the local authority.

We are now about to create a third sector. This is the independent state school - by allowing parents and governors to vote democratically to take their children's school out of the hands of the local authority into the hands of their own governing body. They will bring to many children a better education, because the school will be in the hands of those who care most for it and its future.

We are furthering our Conservative tradition of extending opportunity wider and still wider. The policy will apply to all schools in England and Wales. Nowhere is this policy more needed than in the inner cities.

It is the inner cities where the use of public funds and public intervention is needed to unlock private resources and release private initiatives. [We need to create a competitive market economy, the underlying concepts and dynamism of which are integrated with our social policies in the community.]