



School Talks and our Cannons Close Campaign

On January 29th I honoured an invitation to address the Lower Sixth at Bishop's Stortford High School to talk about the Labour Party.

I had one hour to explain to them the nature of the Party and its underlying beliefs and policies. I discussed some of the important figures in the history of the Party including Clement Atlee, Aneurin Bevan and Ernest Bevin amongst others but not, in a key week for the Chilcot inquiry, Tony Blair. I was asked by one student why I had not included Blair. My reply was that it is too early to access his contribution.

The questions from the 150 strong audience concentrated on the unfairness of a 50% income tax rate and how this would result in 'hard working' families opting to live in Switzerland. My reply indicated that there was no evidence to suggest this was happening but moving to Switzerland just to avoid high taxes would be a very big price to pay in exchange for the advantages of living in the U.K. I was cheered when I suggested bankers might go. Some questions concentrated on what Labour is doing about jobs. This is clearly a major concern for this group of students.

Our Cannons Close parking campaign was praised by Constituency Party. Letters were distributed to local residents outlining the efforts of our Branch members. More on this next month.

Peter Mitchell, Acting Deputy Secretary

It's the economy, stupid.

As the economy continues to recover it was good news to see that unemployment has begun to fall. In the last quarter of 2009, unemployment fell by 7,000 whilst the number of people claiming unemployment benefit fell by 15,200. These figures are very encouraging and show that government action on the economy is working.

The first fall in overall unemployment since the recession started shows that government investment is the best way to secure a sustained economic recovery and that the decisions taken by the Labour government were the right ones. Cutting back on spending now could still unleash a double-dip recession and send unemployment soaring.

We may be turning the corner on unemployment with a fragile recovery but unemployment is still too high for those without jobs and young workers are paying a very high price for this bankers' recession. It is therefore essential that we have a government that is prepared to invest in Britain's future, rather than one that is determined to repeat the policies that failed us in the 1990's.

One has to feel sorry for David Cameron and his team, as the shortcomings in his economic policies means that he has to jump on every bandwagon that comes along. However no amount of 'air-brushed' campaign posters cannot hide the fact that, in the famous words of Bill Clinton 'It's the economy stupid'.

John Battersby, Treasurer

DID YOU KNOW?

The latest opinion polls show a consistent decrease in the Tory share of the vote and an increase in Labour's share. The history of opinion polling suggests the governing party gains share as the election nears.

Extrapolating from the latest polling data, the share of the votes on polling day could be:

Labour 33%, Conservative 37.5, Lib Dems. 22%, Others 7.5%.

With a uniform swing this gives the number of seats for each party as follows:

Labour 293, Conservative 274, Lib. Dems, 55, Others 10, N. Ireland 18. Very interesting and all to play for!

You can update yourself on the latest poll findings at www.ukpollingreport.co.uk



Events and Dates for the Diary

The **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **Wednesday 10th February at 8pm at Pearse House**, Parsonage Lane, Bishop's Stortford. It will be followed by a short Ordinary General Meeting.

Your new Officers will be elected at this meeting. Nomination forms have been posted or emailed to all members. If you have any questions about the nomination process or the duties of elected officers please contact the Deputy Secretary.

Branch Meetings: CLP Meetings:
Every 2nd Wed 15th Feb. Drill Hall, Ware
in month* Every 3rd Monday in month*

All members are welcome and have the opportunity to discuss the latest political issues, nationally and locally, as well as meeting like-minded people in a friendly atmosphere.

*Meeting dates in March and April may change depending on the date of the General Election.

We will continue to discuss alternative dates and times for meetings. We are aware that Wednesday evenings may not be suitable for all of our members. We should also like to canvass your views on local issues so that we can ensure that our local councillors work to respond to local needs and demands more efficiently.

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100 Club Draw Winners

December

155 Christine Clarke
6 Sheila Smith
60 P & S Tripp

January

25 M Popham
218 L Adams
12 B Lerner

Your Newsletter, Your Say

Not getting your views heard? Ring a Branch officer or email the Deputy Secretary on mitpeter1@ntlworld.com. The deadline for items for the next newsletter is:

March 1st 2010

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