

# The Conservative party

→ <http://www.conservatives.com/>

A comment and a summary on parts of the official website of the conservative party in Great Britain.

<http://www.conservatives.com/party/history.cfm>

## A Brief History of the Conservative Party

The text of that page was written by Stuart Ball, Reader, Department of History, University of Leicester.

*(The Conservative Party is grateful to Stuart Ball for contributing this brief history, which represents his personal view. It is not an official Conservative Party statement.)*

That page tells us something about the history of the party. Many important people are named and many facts are mentioned.

I think it's really good, that the text is not too positive, and Mr. Ball also mentioned some negative sides of the party's history.

### Some facts which are good to know about the Conservative party:

- ✓ First of all Mr. Ball writes, that the conservative Party "has been the dominant governing party, but it has also suffered divisions, defeats and spells in the political wilderness."
- ✓ Then, still in the introduction, he says why this party is still successful. In his opinion it's the party's "programme and outlook [which] have adapted to the changing social and political environment, and it has never been exclusively linked to any one issue or group."
- ✓ His next main point is, that "the Conservative Party has always stood for social stability and the rights of property".

### Now the next paragraph begins. Mr. Ball says something about the party's origins:

- ✓ First in the later 17<sup>th</sup> century there was the "Tory party" which "secure hold on government between 1783 and 1830".
- ✓ Then for some reasons which aren't really important now, the "Tory Party" split up in 1846 under Robert Peel.

### Beginning of modern conservatism and the great defeat of the conservative party:

- ✓ Then the Modern Conservatism was born above all by Disraeli, "the founding father of the Conservatives".
- ✓ Disraeli's government was in power from 1874 to 1880. One of the most important things is, that "Disraeli forged the crucial link between the Conservative Party and patriotic pride in nation and empire".

- ✓ Then in 1880 there was a Conservative defeat, because of “economic problems and Gladstone's revival of Liberal spirits”. Although this setback the conservative Party becomes stronger in the final quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- ✓ So the result of this development was, that “the Conservative Party was becoming a national presence with an appeal to all communities, and it was this combination which led to its first period of dominance, from 1886 to 1906.”
- ✓ Then the 3rd Marquis of Salisbury returned to power in 1895 and was in power until 1902. Before that “Liberal Unionists first gave informal support to Salisbury's government of 1886-1892”.
- ✓ The next paragraph Mr. Ball writes about the “worst period of defeat and disunity in the Party's modern history” which was between 1902 and 1914.
- ✓ Andrew Bonar Law “restored Party morale with a series of vigorous attacks upon the government”.

**In times of the First World War the position of the Conservative Party was transformed:**

- ✓ “In May 1915 the Conservatives agreed to join a coalition under the Liberal Prime Minister, H.H. Asquith.”
- ✓ Then in 1918 “Lloyd George was at the height of his popularity.”
- ✓ After that a time of economic depression and failures of policy in 1920-1921 followed. “[Austen] Chamberlain as Party Leader and Lloyd George as Prime Minister” were ousted by the party members

**Then in the time between the wars the Conservative Party was quite successful:**

- ✓ Stanley Baldwin became “party leader and Prime Minister in May 1923”. He remained leader until 1937. He attracted widespread popular support by “standing for honesty, moderation and traditional English values”.
- ✓ “Conservative Party dominated the inter-war decades. Between 1918 and 1945 they were the largest party in the House of Commons for all but two and a half years.”
- ✓ In 1931 there was a crisis where the Conservatives served under the Labour Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. But in “1935 Baldwin replaced Ramsay MacDonald as Prime Minister, and in 1937 he handed on both the Premiership and the Conservative leadership to Neville Chamberlain”.
- ✓ “Winston Churchill, an isolated Conservative critic during the 1930s, now became Prime Minister; later in the same year he also succeeded Chamberlain as party leader.”
- ✓ The failures of the 1930s led to the “second major electoral defeat of the century in 1945”.

**After the war times changed a bit:**

- ✓ The Conservative Party was “in opposition during the 1945-1951 Labour governments”.
- ✓ In the time between the 1940s and the early 1970s they accepted the post-war ‘census’ and so pursued a policy of the Welfare State, the public ownership of certain industries, government intervention in economic affairs, and partnership in industry between trade unions and employers.
- ✓ As a result of these policies the party “regained power in 1951 and then to remained in office continuously until 1964”.
- ✓ In 1957 Anthony Eden failed Suez invasion.
- ✓ Then Harold Macmillan became “Prime Minister and Conservative leader from 1957 until November 1963”.
- ✓ In 1964 the conservatives nearly won the general election, because Sir Alec Douglas-Home managed to regain some lost ground.
- ✓ In 1965 Edward Heath, whose lower middle-class background was thought more publicly acceptable, was elected as party leader.
- ✓ “To general surprise, he won the 1970 election and became Prime Minister.”
- ✓ “The failures of the Heath ministry of 1970-1974 have been the catharsis of modern Conservatism.”

#### **The next years were the time of rise and development of Thatcherism:**

- ✓ In 1975 Margaret Thatcher became the new party leader. Heath lost the ballot for the Party leadership because he lost “the two elections of February and October 1974”.
- ✓ From 1975 until 1979 the conservatives formed the Shadow Cabinet.
- ✓ The core of Thatcherism was the free market.
- ✓ In 1979 the Conservatives had a nice election poster:



- ✓ “Thatcher led the Conservatives to three successive victories in 1979, 1983 and 1987”.
- ✓ Margaret Thatcher restored “Britain's status as an enterprise-based economy and as a significant influence on the international stage”.

- ✓ After Thatcher John Major came into power but the “Major government of 1992-1997 was a painful period for the Conservative Party”.
- ✓ “On 1 May 1997 they suffered their third and final sweeping defeat of the twentieth century.” Then “the Party selected its youngest leader in modern times, William Hague”.
- ✓ “The Conservatives were unable to recover ground during the 1997-2001 Parliament.”
- ✓ In September 2001: Iain Duncan Smith became the new leader of the Conservative Party.

[http://www.conservatives.com/news/article.cfm?obj\\_id=46834&speeches=1](http://www.conservatives.com/news/article.cfm?obj_id=46834&speeches=1)

## **Abstract of a speech delivered by Iain Duncan Smith (3/12/2002)**

### **“Britain in danger of becoming sick man of Europe”**

Mr Duncan Smith said that under Labour, the UK was retreating from the deregulated economy that has set such an example to Europe, while failing to match the EU on high quality state services. “We are also reverting to the high tax, high labour cost economic model that Conservatives worked so hard to move away from, just as our EU competitors are striving to liberalise their economies.”

[http://www.conservatives.com/show\\_campaign.cfm?obj\\_id=25534&CAMP=1MP=1](http://www.conservatives.com/show_campaign.cfm?obj_id=25534&CAMP=1MP=1)

## **A current campaign of the conservatives**

### **Better Learning Campaign**

Most people have strong views on education. If you are at school, college, or university, you will have direct experience of what goes on. If you are a teacher or governor, or one of the many who have given up teaching, you will know what works and what doesn't. If you are a parent with children in the education system, your opinions will be formed by real-life examples.

We want to hear your views. This site is designed to let you tell us what you think needs to change in education. In turn, we will be covering a different topic. Each view sent to us will help us form our new policies.

(Damian Green, Shadow Education Secretary)

I think this campaign is really very good, because children are the future of a nation and as a result of this fact we should pay much attention on issues concerning education.

When a party wants to form new policies by the help of all citizens it is in my opinion quite a good approach, which should be supported by the people.