

Britain and Europe

Challenging questions for
Tony Blair, Kenneth Clarke
and Michael Heseltine

by Bill Cash, MP

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I A decade of waiting and seeing

FOR THE LAST DECADE, the European policy of successive British governments has been to wait and see on the single currency and on the European issue in general. John Major and Tony Blair had, at bottom, the same attitude towards Europe – one of appeasement. The Conservative Party has combined acquiescence in this policy with a distortion of the arguments for party unity.

The history of the Conservative Party demonstrates that party unity is important. But it raises the fundamental issue of what that unity is for. There have been times over the past hundred and fifty years when the Conservative Party has had to come to terms with the dilemma between unity and principle, most notably over the Corn Laws, Home Rule, Tariff Reform and the appeasement of Hitler in the 1930s. At the time of the Corn Laws, for example, following the Tamworth manifesto of 1834, Disraeli wrote in *Coningsby*, “There was indeed a considerable shouting about what they called Conservative principles; but the awkward question naturally arose, ‘What will you conserve?’” The issue is now the future, not only of the Conservative Party but of the nation itself. Another great Conservative politician, Edmund Burke, writing about the nature of political parties, stated, “A political party is a body of men united for promoting, by their joint endeavours, the national interest upon some particular principle upon which they are all agreed.” Disraeli also said, “The Tory Party is a national party or it is nothing.” He did not say nationalistic. He meant the democratic nation-state.

The present European crisis, which has remained with us since 1972 but which had its greatest period of trauma during the Major years, is not a crisis only for the Tory Party but for the whole British political class. The problem is that the establishment has a primary policy of wait and see which ducks

the matter of principle – the right to democratic self-rule for Britain and for all European countries. It thereby undermines the political parties themselves. No wonder there is a high degree of cynicism in the electorate.

What, then, is this policy of wait and see and who is responsible for it? Where does it get us? At this party conference season, despite attempts to frustrate discussion on the subject, there has never been a better time for open debate. As Tony Blair, Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine stand together on the bridge of Britain in Europe, nothing better illustrates the absurdity of seeking to maintain party unity at any price.

II The policy of ‘wait and see’

‘**W**AIT AND SEE’ consists in making one fundamentally flawed assumption. Those who believe in the policy pretend that the European question is a matter of economic pragmatism, not of democratic principle. They say that it is matter of waiting until the time is right, in terms of economics, to abolish the pound. But it can never be right for a democratic country to abandon its own self-government. Europe is a political issue, not an economic one.

‘Wait and see’ in whatever form, is based on the mistaken view that the single European currency and the other associated issues of European integration are all technical matters about economic management. Instead they are about the most fundamental issues which any democracy can face: who governs us and how?

The policy of ‘wait and see’ was born out of despair. The despair itself was born out of a mixture of incomprehension of the real scale of the looming European problem and the desperate desire to hold the Conservative Party together even if in so doing it was condemned to electoral slaughter. There can be no excuse for this failure of nerve and the gross incompetence which it reflected. The tragedy is that it has not been resolved even today.

The ultimate absurdity of the ‘wait and see’ policy is that it is completely unnecessary. Why? Because we know what is being done and the federalist agenda has been clear for the last decade. The suggestion that we should wait until the economic conditions are right for abolishing the pound is, quite simply, dishonest. It supposes that entry into the European Monetary Union is an economic, not a political matter. Yet every continental politician has made it clear that EMU is a key step towards creating a federal Europe. Any British politician who pretends this is not so is deceiving the British people.

The policy is thus the result of a massive failure of nerve and of leadership by all party leaders to confront a key question about the future of Britain's future right to democratic self-government and indeed about the future of democracy in Europe as a whole. The Labour, Liberal and Conservative parties alike have adopted it as a spurious means by which to maintain the façade of party unity where there is in fact none.

III 'Wait and see' marginalises Britain

'Wait and see' includes the temporary palliatives of opt-outs from various aspects of European integration. As John Major's policies, Tony Blair's speech to the London Business School (27th July) and Robin Cook's speech in Japan (6th September) all show, this is in fact no less than a commitment to allowing more integration by the other member states in the European Union with Britain on the outside. This damages the European interest as a whole but also the United Kingdom because while claiming that we can influence from the inside, in practice we do not. It means encouraging more integration without being able to influence it. It is the worst of both worlds.

If the other European states form a tight political union this will drag Britain along in its wake whatever opt-outs we have. On immigration, for instance, the wave of illegal immigrant now coming into Britain is a direct result of the abolition of frontier controls within the Schengen space. Immigrants crossing the Adriatic Sea illegally into Italy have no border controls between there and Calais: they make their way directly to our very borders, and then across them, as a direct result of our having acquiesced in other European states' integration. Our own opt-outs have been and are only a temporary arrangement and do not change very much in reality. In general, therefore, we are bound to Europe by treaty arrangements which the superior weight of those at the centre will control if integration continues. It is therefore absurd to say that our influence will increase if we are more actively 'in' Europe because we already are in it.

Tony Blair has kept us on the outside of various European policy areas – the single currency and Schengen. Like John Major, he has opted out. This is the worst of both worlds. It militates against the interests of Europe as a whole (because

democracy is undermined on the continent) and damages the United Kingdom because the others are taking control of the central institutions of Europe without us. There is nothing more ridiculous than to argue that you can influence better from within whilst at the same time in fact opting out.

We are at a critical stage. There is a new intergovernmental conference in the offing. It is due to conclude in a new treaty in 2001 with further and deeper integration and the accompanying problems of enlargement. Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and the other fast track candidate states have to accept the whole *acquis communautaire* including the single currency, Maastricht and Amsterdam and the new treaty itself. This is empire-building on a massive scale, not to mention the likely future admission of the Baltic states and other countries in Eastern Europe. All these countries are being required to change all their own laws even before they can get into any negotiations. This is no less than blackmail but is hardly noticed or understood. This itself opens up the prospect of tensions with Russia and creates a structure likely to collapse under the weight of its own contradictions.

There are those who argue that 'wait and see' is a prudent policy because of the likelihood that all this will implode. This is the most irresponsible reason for 'wait and see' which could be conceived. This is because, as we have seen, we are further integrating ourselves within the legal framework and therefore bound to be affected by what happens to it. Who in their right mind would advocate a policy on the basis that Europe will collapse, with the horrendous consequences that would have for Europe as a whole, including the United Kingdom as part of it?

IV Get off the fence, Tony

AS THOSE OF US who have been involved in the European question for some time know, European policy is like Alice in Wonderland – utterly surreal. Thus, while Europhiles say that re-negotiation means withdrawal when Euro-realists call for it, they are themselves calling for (different) re-negotiation all the time. The treaties are in a state of constant flux. They have been re-negotiated in 1986 (Single European Act), 1992 (Maastricht), 1997 (Amsterdam) and it is already planned that there will be a new treaty signed in 2001. Similarly, even the most hardened British Europhile pays lip-service to the need for “reform” of the Common Agricultural Policy. But any reform of the CAP means that the treaties will have to be re-negotiated.

Tony Blair is no exception. He says he wants “reform” of Europe but what does this mean? When the Commission collapsed in an ignominious welter of corruption in March, Tony Blair went on about how he was going to use the meltdown of Brussels to introduce radical reform. We have heard nothing more about this since and a new Commission has been re-appointed which looks strikingly like the old – except that Romano Prodi is likely to be even more dynamically integrationist and intolerant of the rights of nation-states than his somewhat somnolent predecessor.

Tony Blair cannot achieve any of the “reforms” he talks about without re-negotiating the treaties. It is utterly hypocritical for him therefore to say he rules out re-negotiation, saying it is a “code-word for being ready to leave”. The plain fact is that he has no intention of trying. He signed Amsterdam and made Europe even less accountable and less democratic than it was before.

Tony Blair calls re-negotiation “dangerous”. But is it dangerous or extremist to insist on democracy? Is it anti-European

to want to call decision-makers to account? What is marginal about calling for a structure which will promote jobs and growth, instead of the stagnation and bureaucracy associated with continental Europe?

The prime minister says, “We are unabashed European reformers.” There is not a scintilla of evidence to support this claim. He simply runs with the flow of more and more integration, taking us deeper and deeper into an undemocratic Europe. He says he wants “decentralisation where possible”. What does “where possible” mean? The only possibility of decentralising Europe lies in changing the treaties. On the concrete question of what fundamental amendments he would make to Europe’s legal order, he is silent.

Tony Blair says Britain seems “always on the receiving end of European initiatives, never their instigators”. So what about some serious amendments, Tony? He says he does not want to see our fisheries decimated. Why doesn’t he do something about it? The Fisheries policy, like everything else, is laid down in the treaties. At no point does the prime minister acknowledge that the only answer is re-negotiation. His talk of reform and dynamism is therefore nothing but the usual Blairite glitz.

V The only answer: re-negotiation

THERE IS ONLY therefore one practical way out of this problem, given the extent of British business involvement in European markets and free trade. The word is ‘re-negotiation’. This would need to address not merely the fringes of the treaties but the very heart of them. It would need to tackle in principle the issue of the single currency and the central bank and the destruction of European democracy. This itself raises the question of what price the people of Europe are prepared to pay for the false promises of stability and employment, by which the European political establishment has sought to delude them. Certainly there is comparative wealth in parts of Europe but the signs of fragility are evident in the lack of confidence by serious investors in the euro, who look at the bottom line and not just at the propaganda.

Furthermore, re-negotiation would need to re-define, in terms merely of co-operation, the current shift towards majority voting in defence and foreign policy. It is a massive deceit to pretend that there is no majority voting under Title V (Common Foreign and Security Policy) of the Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties, as I have repeatedly pointed out to Robin Cook in the House of Commons. Majority voting means British lives being lost in the interests of other member states and the priorities of the European Union as a whole.

Similarly, the shift towards a fundamental Charter of Human Rights within the European legal framework, which is on the agenda for the Finnish presidency and which the Germans want to include in the new treaty – not to mention the tidal waves of problems emerging from Schengen and the removal of borders, all of which, ironically, come under the rubric of Justice and Home Affairs – must also be on the agenda for re-negotiation.

The European issue is not just about the single currency. Refusing to re-negotiate and lacking the will to do so is the wait and see policy by any other name. There are those who argue that a policy of re-negotiation of the kind described above is impossible. Tony Blair alleges in his London Business School speech, “re-negotiation is the code word for being ready to leave”. He adds that re-negotiation is “dangerous”. At the same time, he accuses the Conservative Party of “extremism” and “anti-Europeanism” and of wanting to re-negotiate but he conveniently overlooks the fact that, regrettably, at no time has the Conservative Party ever proposed re-negotiating Maastricht. The party is opaque about re-negotiating Amsterdam.

VI The need for courage

RE-NEGOTIATION does not mean withdrawal. It is well established that any member state can put down any amendments at an Intergovernmental Conference irrespective of the *acquis communautaire*. The Establishment argues that there are amendments which would be wholly unacceptable to the other member states and that those outlined above would be within that category. This is the reasoning behind Tony Blair's assumption the re-negotiation means withdrawal. The political problem which this presents is therefore one of degree. However, if the process of accepting continuing integration, even with opt-outs, is tantamount to refusing to accept re-negotiation, subject only to the assumption that it will all collapse anyway or that there will be no fundamental changes, then the consequence is that we go ahead with further integration and all the rest is no more than words.

Indeed, during John Major's government, the White Paper stated at paragraph 12, "If we were to press ideas which would stand no chance of general acceptance ... we would do better to concentrate on achieving sensible amendments." Given the necessity of retrieving the situation created by Maastricht and now Amsterdam, these "sensible amendments" involve the fundamental changes proposed above – i.e. the single currency, Justice and Home Affairs and Common Foreign and Security Policy. If these matters are off limits, then we might just as well accept that the federalist agenda will continue notwithstanding. This is a issue for the Conservative Party which will be addressed below.

However, the schizophrenia of wait and see is also evident in the Labour government's approach to Europe. Tony Blair says that re-negotiation is not an option but at the same time he claims to want fundamental reform in Europe. Like politicians from other parties he says, for instance, that he wants to reform

the Common Agricultural Policy. Many have said this before and their promises have proved to be mere words. But even if the pledge were serious, it would involve fundamental re-negotiation of the treaties.

For that matter, the entire European political class says it is in favour of re-negotiation – in its federal direction, to be sure. The German Foreign Minister has said on several occasions that he wants a European constitution with a charter of fundamental rights. It is obvious that this would create a wholly new European legal order. What more fundamental change than this could be envisaged? If our partners are allowed to propose fundamental changes to the way our legal systems work, then why are we not allowed to prepare fundamental proposals which go in the opposite direction?

The supporters of ‘wait and see’ are defeatists. They think that the present direction of ever deeper European integration is inevitable. They say they want to reform Europe and make it more flexible but they never do because, secretly, they believe it is impossible. Our policy of re-negotiation must be very proactive. It must start a vigorous debate with other European governments but, perhaps even more importantly, it must engage actively with the electorates of other European countries, many of whom have grave misgivings about the current direction of European policy.

VII 'Wait and see' – what it really means for Britain

TO UNDERSTAND THE EFFECTS of the current state of affairs we need to look at what the current treaties mean for the United Kingdom across the board – in economic, political and constitutional terms.

- **Taxation.**

The harmonisation of tax to pay for the aims of the European Union, despite assertions to the contrary, is emphatically on the agenda as numerous European political figures have stated.

- **Agriculture.**

The farming community of the United Kingdom is in crisis as a result of the CAP. The fisheries industry has been decimated.

- **Education.**

Classroom sizes are dictated by the Treasury clamp on public spending which is a result of shadowing the Maastricht criteria on deficit spending.

- **Health.**

Waiting lists are growing for the same reasons.

- **Defence.**

The cutback in our defence expenditure derives from the same restrictions.

- **Environment and transport.**

The same applies.

- **Devolution.**

In Scotland, Wales and even Northern Ireland, the policies there are linked to the creation of European provincial governments, undermining the nation-state. Indeed, in relation to Northern Ireland, it is said that John Major advanced the “Northern Ireland Peace Process” in secret negotiations with the Republicans before the August 1994 so-called cease-fire in which Provisional Sinn Fein were told, “The final solution is union [i.e. a United Ireland]. The historical train – Europe – determined that. We are committed to Europe. Unionists will have to change. This island will be as one... Confidentiality was of the utmost importance. Only Major, Mayhew, Hurd and Secretary to the Cabinet [Butler] knew of all this.” [E. Mally and D. McKittrick, *The fight for peace*, Heinemann 1996, pp. 248–49.] Nothing could be clearer than the concessions implicit in the so-called peace process which lie at the heart of the horrendous questions now before us in the continuation of this policy of appeasement, following the Good Friday “agreement” and the policies of Tony Blair and Mo Mowlam over de-commissioning. These follow directly from the acceptance of the European agenda for Northern Ireland.

- **Foreign policy and defence.**

The failure of the European Union over the Gulf, Bosnia and Kosovo, emanating from the Maastricht Treaty and its precursor policies, compounded by Amsterdam, have opened up fundamental questions about the role of Nato. There is a vacuum of policy affecting Russia, the USA and Nato.

- **The EMU Stability Pact.**

This agreement has highlighted the impossibility of genuine economic convergence, the problems of Italy and the whole question of regional subsidies to achieve a spurious political union.

- **Trade.**

The continuing trade deficit between the United Kingdom and the other European Union member states remains a critical question. In every year since Britain joined the Common Market we have incurred a balance of payments deficit: the total deficit now comes to some £120 billion. This is totally unnecessary. According to the latest OECD figures, the exports of the other EU member states to the UK amount to £170 billion per annum, which they could not conceivably disavow for the sake of their own economies. Moreover, they cannot legally exclude the United Kingdom under rules prescribed by the World Trade Organisation and even the European Union itself. We have never called their bluff. It is not simply a question of words. It is also a question of the trade-off between the present EU at any price as a political entity with the destruction of democracy which this involves, and the practical effect which re-negotiation could achieve.

- **Majority voting.**

There is already too much majority voting. Unless resisted there will be more. This is a one-way street to political union and the undermining of national parliaments.

- **Citizenship.**

Carried to its logical conclusion, the Maastricht arrangements would substitute individual national citizenship for a glorified political union.

- **Subsidiarity.**

Despite the attempts to define this within the legal framework of the European Union, subsidiarity means nothing. As Lord Mackenzie succinctly observed, it is “gobbledegook”. It is simply a cover for transferring the levers of Government in Europe to the objectives of political union.

- **Pensions.**

The European pensions system is in collapse. Our European partners cannot afford to pay their ageing population and demographic collapse makes the imminent crisis very serious. The basic pension requirements they have assumed, graphically described by Ann Robinson, Director of the National Association of Pensions funds in *The European Journal* (Volume 6, No. 9) show that a crisis is looming to which there is no answer within the European treaties unless they are re-negotiated.

ALL THESE MATTERS require re-negotiation, unless they are those who believe they can continue to live in a Euro-fools’ paradise.

The results of the wait and see policy are a weak United Kingdom, claiming to influence from the outside of the present treaties but which, if they were re-negotiated, it could genuinely influence from the inside; a European Union which plunges on its uncritical course of integration; and at the same time an increasingly weakened Conservative Party, failing to grapple with these massive problems and losing out within the United Kingdom.

VIII ‘Wait and see’ – the Conservative Party

THE WAIT AND SEE POLICY is no more than a spurious smokescreen for a hopeless attempt to construct party unity where there is none.

As I argued in the *Blue Paper*, published by the European Foundation in March 1996, “If there is no meeting of minds for re-negotiation at the Intergovernmental Conference (which led to Amsterdam) this will be because of the notion of irrevocability which we conceded at Maastricht. As a first step (as I argued in the confidence motion on the Maastricht treaty itself) this must be re-negotiated but if they refuse then we must consider a phased programme of practical and mutual disengagement from the governmental provisions of the treaty in order to sustain our sovereignty and democracy. If this proves impossible, then we may be forced into total withdrawal, as I said in June 1995 to the House of Lords Committee on the IGC. This is not an objective but may prove inevitable if the right steps are not taken now.” Since then, the Labour party has won power, largely because John Major, in the General Election which followed, gave in to Kenneth Clarke and the Europhile tendency and ducked the issue. This cannot be allowed to continue. This is the present challenge for the Conservative Party in opposition.

If the Conservative party realigns its policy on Europe, it could win the general election as it could have won the last. The extraordinary question is, Why doesn’t it seize this opportunity? The wait and see policy during John Major’s government could have been redeemed by accepting the Danish ‘No’ vote in 1992 on Maastricht, by re-negotiating in the aftermath of the ERM catastrophe on 16th September 1992, and by insisting at Maastricht not on opt-outs but by the veto of the Maastricht treaty itself.

Although this is now in the past, the need for a re-negotiating policy by the Conservative Party remains paramount in the national and in the European interest. We would then truly lead Europe in the direction of sanity and in line with the profound concerns of the populations of the other member states, including Germany. Variable geometry and the advocacy of so-called flexibility simply allows the other member states to continue to move ahead into a hard core which is rotten on the inside, as the collapse of the European Commission amply demonstrates. This is not a European community or union but a racket by the political class to take power away from the people – evidenced by the unaccountability of the central bank and the overweening power of the European Commission, which should be reduced to a secretariat, as I argued in my pamphlet in 1990, *Arguments Against Federalism – a Democratic Way to European Unity*. It is essential to move away from the legal framework of a European Government, laid down by Maastricht and Amsterdam, and to insist on re-negotiation based on European trade, political co-operation and the re-establishment of national parliamentary sovereignty in each of the member states.

The ultimate objection to political union is that only when the electorates of the individual member states are allowed to veto matters because they are not in the interests of the states themselves can, in the words of the Heath White Paper of 1971, national sovereignty be preserved and the fabric of the Community be sustained.

The Conservative Party has a special problem. No one can doubt that, in a whole variety of speeches since he became leader, William Hague has set out an agenda which challenges the continuing movement towards a suicidal European project. With the advent of a new Intergovernmental Conference, the message must now be reinforced by challenging the Labour Party on the issue of re-negotiation. It is not practical or

feasible to wait and see any longer. With the opinion polls clearly demonstrating that over 60% of the British electorate would say 'No' in a referendum on the single currency, which comes from all quarters of the British people, including over 60% of the trade union movement led by the likes of Rodney Bickerstaff of UNISON and Bill Morris of the TGWU, the moment has now come. In order to prepare the agenda for the next general election, let alone the referendum, there is a clear imperative for William Hague and the Conservative Party to set out its stall and to prepare the British people for fundamental re-negotiation of the treaties, for which there is overwhelming political support.

IX Action this day – the policy of re-negotiation.

IN OTHER WORDS, the Conservative Party has now a unique opportunity to win the argument and the next general election and, as the European elections demonstrated in 1999, to win the high ground and to outflank those, such as the United Kingdom Independence Party, who argue for immediate withdrawal.

On every front, including the failure, well understood by the electorate, of the Labour government, to fulfil its promises on the domestic agenda, such as class sizes and waiting lists, because of the shadowing of the Maastricht criteria, the Conservative Party is poised to achieve a breakthrough before the general election if it does so in good time. On any objective basis, given the list of interests from taxation through farming and the trade deficit to the pensions question and a myriad of other issues, there is a constituency across the political spectrum which would support a clear and decisive agenda which would draw in, in the national interest, a whole range of people who deserted the Conservative Party at the last general election but who are now increasingly aware that the Labour Party cannot deliver what it promised. The clarification required by the Conservative Party in devising a clear and simple message is there for the taking and it would be gross negligence and betrayal of the national interest not to combine the sense of discontent expressed in opinion polls, in the European elections. We need to create the greatest surge of public opinion in the direction of re-negotiation.

Why then is this not Conservative Party policy? The answer lies, very simply, in the obsession to maintain a spurious party unity on the European issue which is neither in the party interest nor in the national interest, when the issues at stake are not only to win the next election but also as a matter of

principle to defend the right to democratic self-rule. We have now reached the position in which the excuse of party unity no longer holds water. William Hague's message has to be supplemented by a practical two-year campaign for re-negotiation, which puts Tony Blair in an impossible position of claiming that he wants reform but at the same time being prepared to continue the process of compounding European integration and political union, whilst committing himself to policies which undermine his ability to deliver. This would avoid the accusation that failure to call for re-negotiation was seeking power even more than party unity.

And who are the obstacles to the Conservative Party developing such a policy? If the present message were to be continued without a policy of re-negotiation, it would be no more than smoke and mirrors. We must show the connection between the European and the domestic agenda. The slogan 'In Europe but not run by Europe', many may have forgotten, was stated in those very words in the Conservative Party manifesto of 1997, when John Major declined to repudiate the process of further European integration. The necessity, therefore, is to put muscle into the message and demonstrate that we will not be run by Europe but that we are prepared, in a policy of re-negotiation, to show by proposing specific and fundamental amendments in good time how we will not be run by Europe. This is not only in our own interests but in those of Europe as whole, where the evidence for the need for re-evaluation is inescapable.

In other words, the ideology of political union has to be met within the legal framework of the European Union, by proposing amendments which challenge the European establishment on their own record, as evidenced by the crises in other member states in the European elections, increasing unemployment, low growth, the instability of the euro and the collapse of the European Commission.

The obstacles are simply an increasingly discredited group of Conservatives who have aligned themselves with Tony Blair's 'Britain in Europe' campaign which flies in the face of the strength of the pound, which comes from the support of the international market for the British currency, our high rates of employment, sensible rates of interest and inflation. These owe everything to our position, after the collapse of the Exchange Rate Mechanism, and which the Labour Party have adopted as their own successes notwithstanding their commitment to the principle of accepting economic and therefore political union. The Labour Party are therefore continuing the Majorite policy where it suits them but have opened up a vast contradiction between the ideology of European integration and the practical consequences for the domestic agenda, for which they can and should be exposed.

Indeed, William Hague, to his great credit, stated during the leadership election in the *European Journal* that he was against the European single currency in principle but that he did not wish to leave the European Union. This remains a winning platform. Messrs Clarke and Heseltine have now endorsed Tony Blair's 'Britain in Europe' campaign which fundamentally contradicts the Hague position and the national interest and raises the stakes which must now be played. If the question arises, which it surely does, as to whether it is possible to reconcile the existence of a party as a body of men united on a common principle in the national interest with the proposition by the Disraeli that the Tory party is a national party or it is nothing – which are not mere slogans but which go to the very heart of the role of the Conservative Party – then it follows that party unity must be subordinated to the fundamental interests of the Conservative Party. This is a matter of European and national interest and will enjoy massive public support.

In the recent private survey by Nottingham University, which was funded by the government and in no sense a

Eurosceptic analysis, 67% of Conservative MPs in the present Parliament declared that they would never accept a single currency. Combined this with the myriad problems presented by the European Union in its quest for political union and the economic disadvantages which have accumulated both in Europe and in the United Kingdom, there can be no doubt that the will-power and leadership which is now required must lead to the preparation of a clear and simple policy of re-negotiation leading to a Conservative victory in the next general election and success in the promised referendum on the single currency.

There really is no answer to such a policy and it would be gravely irresponsible for any great political party to avoid the challenge that this represents. There is a huge constituency in the United Kingdom which, encouraged by William Hague's many speeches on the European issue, wish the Conservative Party, as the only political party who are within striking distance of saving the United Kingdom, its democracy and Europe itself, to subscribe to this simple objective.

The fault, dear Brutus, lies not in our stars but in ourselves that we are underlings.

Now at this party conference, is the time and the place.