

DT022 - Bluster of Charles Wardle MP

It was generous of you to allow the former Tory Minister Charles Wardle MP to fill three columns of your letters page with his unconvincing bluster (6 April 2000). He has inflicted considerable damage on the Conservative Party by his unwise decision to enter the paid employ of Mohammed Fayed.

Mr Wardle attacks my old friend Gerald Howarth MP, saying he is 'the bosom pal of the discredited Neil Hamilton'. That is pretty rich, coming from Mr Wardle. What chiefly 'discredited' Mr Hamilton was the allegation (which he denies) that he received corrupt payments from Mr Wardle's new employer.

Anyway, what is wrong with standing by your friend, even if he is 'discredited'? As I have good cause to know in my own personal life, Gerald Howarth is intensely loyal. He is not a fair-weather friend, sloping off if his 'bosom pal' meets adversity. That is one of the old-fashioned virtues we need to cherish in this Age of Blair.

