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CAMBRIDGE SOCIETY FOR THE APPLICATION OF
RESEARCH

NOTE CHANGE OF START TIME – ONE HOUR EARLIER THAN LAST YEAR!!

“Science in Government”

Professor David King
The Government's Chief Scientific Advisor

Monday 11th March, 2002: **7.30 p.m. - 9.00 p.m.**¹
The Wolfson Lecture Theatre, Churchill College, Cambridge

Abstract

Professor King's talk will centre on the role of the Chief Scientific Advisor; last years Foot and Mouth outbreak, and Energy and Climate change; here are some snippets from previous addresses he has made on the subjects:

Climate Change:

“The Government's national climate change programme is addressing international commitments to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. The strategy addresses both parts the Government has to play: abatement and adaptation. With respect to business, the strategy encourages businesses of all sizes and kinds to find cost effective measures to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The programme also supports the UK's leading role in climate change research.

However successful we are at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, further climate change is bound to occur and we must take action to adapt. The Government is building adaptation into policies relating to areas such as water resources, flood defences and planning guidance. Businesses will also need to consider how they will adapt, thinking on longer timescales than they ever have before”.

About the Speaker

David King was born in Durban, South Africa. He graduated from the University of Witwatersrand. He was Lecturer in Chemical Physics at the University of East Anglia, where he carried out far-reaching work on surface kinetics. In his early 30s he was made the Brunner Chair of Physical Chemistry at the University of Liverpool and began his work with Supersonic Molecular Beams, which was pioneering in the field and continues to grow in importance.

King's big chance came when he became the Head of the Department of Chemistry at the University of

¹**Note:** We have now decided to **KEEP** the **earlier** start time of **7.30 p.m.**; Thanks to all who voted, and sorry to those who wanted to revert to the later time – we hope you will continue to support us, nevertheless

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Cambridge. He commissioned an architectural analysis of future needs within weeks, and within months was frightening the life out of the University by proposing a refurbishment and building scheme costing £70 M; his efforts were recognised by the £28 M award that came as part of a joint Government-Wellcome Trust scheme to give the kiss of life to run-down university laboratories. He also served as Master of Downing College, Cambridge.

King is one of the leading surface scientists in the UK and a respected international researcher with an outstanding track record. At Cambridge he has established a research effort in surface science which is one of the premier groups worldwide. His speciality is the development of new, sophisticated techniques for the study of surface chemistry, particularly the invention of Single Crystal Absorption Microcalorimetry. He is also recognised for his innovative efforts to interface theoretical and experimental chemistry.

His is the only group in the UK capable of tackling speculative and technically difficult projects in this area and thus contributes significantly to UK competitiveness.

Since taking up the post of Chief Scientific Adviser to the UK Government at the end of 2000 he has maintained the position of the 1920 Professor of Physical Chemistry at Cambridge. He underwent a baptism of fire with the outbreak of foot & mouth disease in February 2001, but has also worked on issues including climate change, energy research and BSE. His role involves overseeing science advice across UK government as well as the provision of scientific advice to the Prime Minister.

David King's great love outside science is contemporary art.

About the Subject (Organising Secretary's notes)

Professor King is a Cambridge man, formerly Head of the Department of Chemistry. He still lives here; which makes it a bit easier to get him for one of our lectures!

He is basically the key person who influences government policy on science. He certainly has a catholic range of subjects, all very topical.

Now is your chance to ask the government's science representative all those hard questions about the environment, our agriculture, and anything else which comes to mind! Should be good; he's invited all his old friends and colleagues from the University to the lecture, so you should see some new faces, too.

Richard Freeman
Organising Secretary