

Gove: Only the Conservatives can get Brexit done

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove MP, speaking today at Conservative Party Conference in Manchester, said:

(Check against delivery)

These are testing times...

...for our party

...and for our country.

A paralysed parliament.

A polarised politics.

Urgent reforms this country needs...

...put on pause.

And all because the referendum vote has not been honoured...

... and Brexit has not been delivered.

17.4 million people...

...voted to leave the European Union

...in June 2016.

More than have ever voted for any party

...or any

policy

...in our
country's history.

But three
years on that democratic verdict has not been honoured.

We cannot
allow this division and delay to continue.

We must Get.
Brexit. Done.

And the only
party leader determined

...to secure a
good deal for Britain

... and get
Brexit done

... is our
Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Now, I've
known Boris for more than thirty years.

And while we
haven't always agreed

...on
everything...

...let me tell
you this.

Boris is
brave...

...he is
determined

...he loves
this country

...and he delivers.

And that is
because Boris is an optimist.

He believes
in the power of the British people...

...to change
the world for the better.

That
optimism has allowed him to overcome big challenges before.

Throughout
his career of public service...

...people have
told him it just can't be done.

You can't
possibly beat Ken Livingstone in London...

... to become the
mayor.

You can't
possibly get re-elected in a Labour city...

...with a
Conservative Government in Westminster.

You can't
possibly get new bikes on our roads...

...new buses
on our streets

...keep fares
down and the economy growing

...cut crime

...get
investment for new schools

...deliver the
world's best ever Olympics

...and lift
thousands out of poverty.

But Boris
delivered.

As he did
when we led the Vote Leave campaign.

People said
we'd never win.

The odds

were against us...

The
establishment was against us...

Even Nigel
Farage was against us!

But Vote
Leave won...

...Because our
message then...

... like our
Prime Minister today

...was
optimistic,

...forward-looking,

...and
freedom-loving.

And that is
why...

... I trust
Boris

... to do what
we've waited too long to do.

Get a great
deal.

Get Brexit done.

And allow us
all to get on with what matters.

Investing in
our precious NHS...

... supporting
teachers in our great state schools,

...backing our
police in the fight against crime.

These are
the people's priorities.

They are our
priorities.

That is why
we are the real people's party.

And while we
are optimistic about our future...

... we are
realistic about some of the challenges immediately ahead.

In getting
Brexit done, we will have to show resolution.

We have to
negotiate hard to get the right Brexit deal.

And if we
don't get a deal by October 31st...

...we will
have to leave without a deal.

We cannot
allow this process to drag on indefinitely.

Now, I don't
deny that leaving without a deal will...

...initially...

...mean there
are some challenges.

The EU plans
to impose new tariffs...

...new checks
on trade

...and isn't
showing the same generosity to UK nationals

...as we show
to EU nationals.

But we will
stay open for trade...

...open for
business

...and

determined to respect the rights of EU citizens here,

We have
taken huge steps to get ready...

... investing
in new customs procedures to smooth trade,

...supporting
businesses to adapt to new rules

...and
standing up for our citizens abroad.

The level of
our preparations has accelerated massively...

... since Boris
became Prime Minister.

Of course we
cannot anticipate every risk...

... and cannot
guarantee against some turbulence.

Which is why
I would much prefer us to secure a deal with the EU before October 31st.

It's in
their interests as well as ours.

But if we
can't, then...

...leave we
must.

Because...

...while the
difficulties caused by leaving without a deal will pass,

...the damage
to our democracy

...in not
getting Brexit done

...would
endure,

...and
resound,

...for much
longer.

Our
democracy is precious –

...and it depends
on people trusting us as politicians

...when we say
we will put our trust in them.

On the eve
of the referendum result in 2016...

... it was the
late Paddy Ashdown who got to the heart of it.

He said...

“I will
forgive no-one who does not accept the sovereign voice of the British people
once it has spoken...

...When
democracy speaks, we obey.”

When
democracy speaks

...we, the
politicians, obey.

It is the
position of a true liberal...

...and a true
democrat.

But it is
not the position of the party...

... that today
calls itself the Liberal Democrats.

They refuse
to accept the sovereign voice of the British people.

They have
worked constantly...

...to delay,
dilute and deny Brexit.

And now they
want to cancel Brexit altogether.

Telling the
public they won't be listened to until they agree with Guy Verhofstadt...

...isn't
liberal or democratic.

It's
patronising...

...condescending,

...we know
best,

...get back in
line,

...know your
place arrogance...

...of the kind
that makes Marie Antoinette...

...seem like a
model of grounded humility!

Voting
Liberal Democrat doesn't get Brexit done...

...but it does
risk something else.

Prime
Minister Jeremy Corbyn.

Voting for
any party other than the Conservatives...

... risks
letting Labour into power...

...and Corbyn
into Downing Street.

And Labour
in Government wouldn't get Brexit done.

They want to
prolong our membership of the EU...

...negotiate

for many months more with Brussels

...agree a
deal on the EU's terms

...then hold
another referendum

...in which
they'd be prepared to say we should stay in the EU forever.

When we
should be getting on with improving education...

...
strengthening the NHS,

...fighting
crime

...and
creating jobs...

Labour would
be getting on with what it does best...

...showing
weakness abroad,

...sowing
division at home

...and tearing
itself and the country apart.

You simply
need to look at Jeremy Corbyn's record.

How can we
let a man who supported SinnFein/IRA...

...be in
charge of our security?

How can we
let a man who thinks we shouldn't have immigration controls...

...be in
charge of our borders?

How can we
let a man who thinks we should punish companies for being successful...

...be in

charge of our economy?

And how on
earth can we let a man who's indulged, ...accommodated

...and excused

...the most
terrible anti-semitism...

...be in
charge of our democracy?

Soft on
terrorism,

...supine on
security,

...bankrupt
economically

...and a
danger to minorities...

Jeremy
Corbyn is totally unfit to be Prime Minister of our country.

Yes, these are
testing times.

But when our
party...

...and our
country

...have been
tested in the past...

we have met

...and
mastered

...the
challenges of our times.

Conservatives
rose to the challenge of the industrial revolution...

...with the
courage to cut tariffs

...and the
compassion to pass laws to protect factory workers.

Conservatives
responded to the turbulence of the 1930s...

...with
investment in health

...and housing
for the poorest

...and the
resolution to re-arm

...in the face
of dictatorships.

Conservatives
reversed the decline of our nation in the 1980s...

... by
spreading wealth,

... extending
home ownership,

... increasing
educational opportunity

...and facing
down Marxism

...at home and
abroad.

And after
the great crash of 2008

Conservative
leadership...

...repaired
our economy,

...reformed
our schools,

...helped
millions into work,

...put
rehabilitation at the heart of justice,

...fought
climate change,

...enhanced
our environment

...and held
the light of liberty aloft...

...while
freedom came under attack across the globe.

Now we have
the chance...

...this
generation of Conservatives

...to embrace
a new decade of renewal.

To make our
country the best in the world...

...for
education and science

The best in
the world...

...when it
comes to using technology

...to banish
hunger,

...fight
climate change

...and end
poverty.

The most
civilised,

...tolerant

...and
welcoming home

... to people
of all backgrounds.

The most creative,

...imaginative

...and
entrepreneurial place on earth.

A nation
renewed...

...and a
mission to lead the world.

That is our
challenge...

...and our
calling.

Let us be
worthy of it together.

ENDS