

Jeremy Corbyn first speech of the 2017 General Election campaign

***CHECK
AGAINST DELIVERY***

Jeremy

Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, will today deliver his first speech of the 2017 General Election campaign at Church House, saying:

The dividing lines in this election could not be clearer from the outset. It is the Conservatives, the party of privilege and the richest, versus the Labour Party, the party that is standing up for working people to improve the lives of all.

It is the establishment versus the people and it is our historic duty to make sure that the people prevail. A duty for all of us here today, the duty of every Labour MP, a duty for our half a million members – including the 2,500 who have joined in the last 24 hours.

Much of the media and establishment are saying that this election is a foregone conclusion.

They think there are rules in politics, which if you don't follow by doffing your cap to powerful people, accepting that things can't really change, then you can't win.

But of course, they do not want us to win. Because when we win it is the people, not the powerful, who win.

The nurse, the teacher, the small trader, the carer, the builder, the office worker, the student, the carer win.
We all win.

It is the establishment that complains I don't play the rules: by which they mean their rules. We can't win, they say, because we don't play their game.

We don't fit in their cosy club.
We 're not obsessed with the tittle-tattle of Westminster or Brussels. We don't accept that it is natural for Britain to be governed by a ruling elite, the

City and the tax-dodgers, and we don't accept that the British people just have to take what they're given, that they don't deserve better.

And in a sense, the establishment and their followers in the media are quite right. I don't play by their rules.

And if a Labour Government is elected on 8 June, then we won't play by their rules either.

They are yesterday's rules, set by failed political and corporate elites we should be consigning to the past.

It is these rules that have allowed a cosy cartel to rig the system in favour of a few powerful and wealthy individuals and corporations.

It is a rigged system set up by the wealth extractors, for the wealth extractors.

But things can, and they will, change.

Britain needs a Labour government that is prepared to fight for people in every part of the country, our towns, villages, as well as big cities.

A Labour government that isn't scared to take on the cosy cartels that are hoarding this country's wealth for themselves. It needs a government that will use that wealth to invest in people's lives in every community to build a better future for every person who lives here.

Because the Conservatives, drunk on a failed ideology, are hell bent on cutting every public service they get their hands on, and they will use all of the divide-and-rule tricks of the Lynton Crosby trade to keep their rigged system intact.

Don't be angry at the privatisers profiting from our public services, they whisper, be angry instead at the migrant worker just trying to make a better life.

Don't be angry at the government ministers running down our schools and hospitals, they tell us, be angry instead at the disabled woman or the unemployed man.

It is the rigged economy the Tories are protecting that Labour is committed to challenging. We will not

let
the elite extract wealth from the pockets of ordinary working people any
longer.

So many people in modern Britain
do what seems like the right thing to do. They get jobs, they spend all day
working hard, they save to buy their own home, they raise children, they look
after elderly or sick relatives. And yet, at the end of it, they get almost
nothing left over as a reward.

Compare their lives with the
multinational corporations and the gilded elite who hide their money in the
Cayman Islands because the Conservatives are too morally bankrupt to take
them
on.

Labour in power will end this
racket and make sure that everybody pays their taxes which fund our public
services.

We will overturn this rigged system.
For all Theresa May's warm words on the steps of Downing Street the
Conservatives will never do any such thing.

Seven
years of broken promises show us that on pay, the deficit, the NHS, our
schools, our environment.

It was their wealthy friends in
the City who crashed our economy. How dare they ruin the economy with their
recklessness and greed and then punish those who had nothing to do with it?
It
was not pensioners, nurses, the low or averaged paid workers or carers who
crashed the economy.

The Conservatives boast of record
numbers of jobs. But what good is that if people in work are getting poorer
and
don't share in the profits of that economy while the Conservatives look after
the wealthy few?

Our
offer is to tackle elderly poverty and loneliness, invest in our economy, NHS
and schools, to improve rights at work and the ten pound living wage.

Britain is the sixth richest
economy in the world. The people of Britain must share in that wealth.

If I were Southern Rail or Philip
Green, I'd be worried about a Labour Government.

If I were Mike Ashley or the CEO
of a tax avoiding multinational corporation, I'd want to see a Tory victory.

Why? Because those are the people who are monopolising the wealth that should be shared by each and every one of us in this country.

Everyone, and I mean everyone, has a contribution to make and a life to lead. Poverty and homelessness are a disaster for the individual and a loss to all of us.

It is wealth that should belong to the majority and not a tiny minority.

Labour is the party that will put the interests of the majority first, while the Tories only really care about those who already have so much.

That is why we will prove the establishment experts wrong and change the direction of this election.

Because the British people know that they are the true wealth creators, held back by a system rigged for the wealth extractors.

Theresa May will insist that this is an election about Brexit. She will try to downplay the issues that affect people's lives every day and instead turn the election into an ego trip about her own failing leadership and the machinations of the coming negotiations in Brussels.

It is only Labour that will focus on what kind of country we want to have after Brexit.

In the coming weeks Labour will lay out our policies to unlock opportunities for every single person in this country.

We will focus on giving people real control over their own lives and make sure that everybody reaps a just reward for the work that they do.

We will no longer allow those at the top to leach off of those who bust their guts on zero hours contracts or those forced to make sacrifices to pay their mortgage or their rent.

Instead of the country's wealth being hidden in tax havens we will put it in the hands of the people of Britain as they are the ones who earned it.

In this election Labour will lead the movement to make that change.

We will build a new economy, worthy of the 21st century and we will build a country for the many not the few.