

John McDonnell at Fire Brigades Union conference

John McDonnell, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, speaking at the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) conference today in Blackpool, will say:

"I'm delighted to be speaking here today after the FBU took the historic decision to re-affiliate to the Labour Party after Jeremy Corbyn became Labour leader.

"Over the next four weeks of campaigning in this General Election, Labour candidates will proudly stand shoulder to shoulder with our firefighters who dedicate their lives to keeping the British public safe.

"It is also 'National nurses day' today, and we know how little Theresa May appreciates them, along with other public sector workers. When she is not reducing their numbers, she is holding down their pay as prices rise.

"The situation has got so bad in our country under the Tories that nurses, and I am sure some of your members, are reliant on foodbanks.

"And what is Theresa May's response when asked about this?

"She dismisses it as a 'complex' issue, and refuses to do anything about it.

"That is the difference between a Labour Prime Minister and a Tory Prime Minister.

"We know it is not a 'complex' issue for why people use foodbanks, it's because they cannot afford to buy food.

"It's because the Tories are letting public sector pay fall behind prices.

"That is why I can give you this promise today, if a Labour Government is elected next month, then we will end the public sector pay freeze, and we will protect our fire and rescue services by ending the reckless and dangerous Tory cuts, which are a risk to communities up and down this country.

"The Conservatives have cut fire services' budgets in England by 17 per cent since 2010. These reckless cuts are putting the

British
public and our firefighters in danger.

“On the economy there is no hiding from the truth.
The Conservatives’ failed economic plan is holding Britain back, undermining
our economy and threatening working people’s living standards.

“This week we’ve seen that only Greece, Italy and
Austria are forecast to suffer bigger falls in real wages by the end of 2018,
according to the TUC. And the Bank of England says
that the economy is falling back, and wages will not keep up with prices.

“Real wages haven’t risen since the Tories came
to power in 2010. And the UK is the only country which has had GDP
growing but wages falling in the last decade.

“After seven years of Tory economic failure, it is
working people in our country who are being made to pay the price as the
Tories
handout billions in tax giveaways to the super-rich and big business.

“This General Election is a choice between a Labour
Party that will stand up for the many and a
Tory Party that only looks after the
privileged few.”