

# John McDonnell's speech to May Day rally at Trafalgar Square

**John**

**McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow chancellor, speaking at the May Day rally in Trafalgar Square today, will say:**

**\*\*CHECK  
AGAINST DELIVERY\*\***

I want to  
thank you all for letting me speak here today.

There are  
those in the Tory press who will wish to paint this gathering in a negative  
light, but this rally on a day like today is really about the positive  
contribution many hardworking people in our country make.

And how  
we can protect them, for the future of our country depends upon it.

Our  
country is divided following the Brexit vote last year. And the Tories seek  
to  
divide it further.

Today's  
deeply worrying revelations on the reckless handling of the EU  
negotiations only act as further proof for why we need a Labour Government  
leading the negotiations with our European allies to ensure jobs and  
living standards are protected.

Not a  
Tory Party prepared to take our country over a cliff-edge.

This  
Government is not just in another galaxy when it comes to Brexit but also  
when  
it comes to solving the problems the silent majority of working families face  
in our country.

Therefore,  
it falls once again to our movement to come together and unite our country,  
and  
stand up for the many suffering under a Tory Government that only  
rewards a rich few.

That is  
why it is vital this remains a peaceful protest, so as not to give our  
enemies

in the Tory press the ammunition they need to misrepresent our peaceful intentions and goals to the public.

Today's

May Day rally must be remembered for its purpose – to focus all our minds on removing a Tory Government.

And it

falls on each and every one of us to be upbeat and take that peaceful positive vision of a Britain reborn on the 9th of June to each and every doorstep over the next few weeks.

But it is

not protest alone that changes these things. Changing government policy is the ultimate aim.

And

changing this Government in its entirety is our ultimate goal right now.

Yesterday,

I announced Labour's 20 point plan to transform our workplaces from the shop-floor right up to the boardroom.

Today,

Jeremy Corbyn announced Labour's plans to reform the housing market, to give renters the protections they desperately need.

But we

can only achieve those goals if all of us here today take this passion out into the communities in our country, win the arguments on the doorsteps, and in our family and friendship groups, to get a Labour Government elected next month.

Today may

be the 1st May, but let's make June 8th the last day of Theresa May and her Tory Government.

And it is

vital we do this.

As this

is a Tory Government that has presided over a country in which our nurses have to rely on foodbanks, yes that's right. Nurses, the heroes of our NHS. Abandoned by this Government.

And all

this Tory Prime Minister can say about it is there are "complex" reasons.

It just

shows how out of touch and how little she and her party really care about the problems facing hardworking people in our country.

The reasons why people use foodbanks are not complex – they use them because they are hungry and cannot afford to feed themselves.

And many of them are in that position because of seven wasted years of Tory economic failure.

That's why we need a Labour Government that will stand up for the many, and not the few.

We are all here today to speak up for the silent majority of working people that have never met an opinion pollster, but have experienced seven years of Tory austerity, and are now more than ever feeling the pinch of those policies.

The nurses using foodbanks.

The teachers holding raffles to afford books for their pupils.

The people sleeping rough on our streets, homeless without somewhere to sleep tonight.

The parents who are worried about paying the bills as their wages can't keep up with the prices in the shops, and worry about keeping a roof over their children's heads.

Or those people who just want to get on the property ladder and get on in life, but cannot afford a mortgage. Their aspirations are risked by a reckless Tory Brexit and what it means for our economy.

This is what we mean by the Tories' rigged economy. And why we must end it.

Because those families struggling to get by – something this Prime Minister will never understand – need a Labour Government to put fairness at the heart of our economy again.

That is why we are here, united to stand up for the silent majority of working people

in our country.

But it  
cannot remain silent and will not remain silent for very long.

That is  
why all of us here today need to make sure that our voices are heard, and  
that  
when we leave, we persuade as many people as we can to get out and vote next  
month.

As  
nothing is a certainty.

We can  
change this country.

Right  
now, there are six million people earning less than the living wage in our  
country, and four million children set to grow up in poverty.

But they  
do not have to be in this position.

We can  
change this, and we will.

And all  
we have to do is change the Government by getting as many people as possible  
to  
vote Labour on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June.

This will  
be the biggest political battle we have ever known.

But  
remember we are fighting for the future of our country.

The  
choice is a Tory future in which nurses use foodbanks, and millions live in  
poverty and low pay.

Or a  
Labour future for the many, with a high wage, high skill, fair economy of the  
future.

Put  
simply, it is a choice between a Labour Government that stands up for the  
interests of the many in our country, not a Tory Government that only stands  
up  
for a rich few.

So let's

go out there, and let's win this fight.

Solidarity.