

Leadsom: Just get on with it!

Andrea

Leadsom, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, speaking today at Conservative Party Conference in Manchester, said:

(Check against delivery)

“That’s what people are saying right across this country and as Business Secretary I can assure you that’s what businesses are saying too – they need certainty, and for that to happen Parliament has to stop messing around.

We know there’s no crystal ball in politics, but no one could have foreseen how parliament would end up so determined to overturn the referendum.

So when Boris became Prime Minister it was such a relief to see so clearly his personal commitment to getting us out of the EU. He has the personality and pizzazz to get Brexit over the line, doesn’t he!

And to support his efforts, my urgent priority in this new job has been getting business ready for Brexit.

I’ve been touring the four UK nations to talk to different businesses about their own Brexit preparations and how government can help. Of course there are plenty of challenges, but the efforts of so many over the last three years means we are well prepared for leaving the EU.

But what’s really fascinating about being the lead minister for our business and energy sectors is the chance to take advantage of the superb future that lies ahead for our great country.

We’re standing on the cusp of a new industrial revolution, and for the first time since the first industrial revolution, the UK is positioned to lead in extraordinary new ways.

So I want to talk about my three top priorities – things I want the UK to be famous for. And with Kwasi Kwarteng, Chris Skidmore, Kelly Tollhurst, Nadhim Zahawi and Ian Duncan we’ve a superb Ministerial team as diverse and talented as the United Kingdom we are working for.

Our first priority is to lead the

world in tackling climate change.

Since 1990 we've reduced our carbon emissions by 42% – while growing our economy by nearly three quarters.

So we've shown that decarbonising can also create jobs and prosperity – we already have 400,000 jobs in the low carbon sector but this could reach 2 million by 2030.

We're working out the path to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. We can do it, and we will help the world to do it.

Contrast that to Labour who last week announced net zero by 2030! Total tosh!

A perfect example of Labour promising something they can't deliver and don't understand.

Unusually, I find myself agreeing with the GMB Union, who's spokesman said, this 'threatens whole communities, threatens whole jobs... This means that within a decade people's petrol cars being confiscated. This will mean families can only take one flight every five years. Net zero carbon emissions by 2030 is utterly unachievable.' Well said that man!

Turning to our second priority – to transform the productive capability of our economy.

All my life I've been impressed by the huge range of talented UK scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs, whose work will transform lives, let alone our economy.

And in the Business department we've set out what we call our 'grand challenges'. Each will change lives for the better.

For example our life sciences grand challenge has just kicked off the world's biggest DNA research project that will help to prevent and even cure diseases like cancer, Parkinson's and dementia.

Our space grand challenge will help grow our commercial satellite industry as well as develop the astonishing prospect of space flight that could one day offer a four hour trip to Australia via the stars. Once he retires, I plan to recommend it to the Speaker of the Commons.

Our automation grand challenge will see the way we travel change profoundly in years to come with your parcels delivered by drones and your car driving itself. Imagine not having to ask your kids to pick you up after a good night out.

And our third priority, something I care passionately about. And that is to make the UK the best place in the world to work or to start a business. We have always been the Party of business

When I was growing up, my Mum and StepDad had a furniture shop, and I remember their six day working week.

I also remember the appalling impact on the economy of a Labour government back in the 1970s. When the super tax on the self employed was 98%.

Those memories shaped my politics, but it was Margaret Thatcher's vision of a shareholding democracy and her introduction of the right to buy that shaped my personal ambition -and that is to help everybody to build a secure life for themselves and their families.

So I want to see a better environment for business, less red tape and lower taxes to incentivise them;

But at the same time I want to make sure those who work for them get a decent wage, a fair contract and when they face life's challenges such as parenthood, illness or caring responsibilities, a modern working environment allows them the flexibility to balance work and life.

Contrast to Labour – if they're not nationalising you, they're stealing part of your business, and if you're the worker they pretend to be on your side but their attack on our thriving economy will mean job losses, lower investment and less opportunities.

So if Labour ever pluck up the courage to face the voters, then we should all make the case for the Conservative Government this country needs. So when you're asked: what will the Conservatives do for me?

You can tell them –

It is a Conservative Government that will lead the world in tackling climate change;

It is a Conservative Government
helping you live longer, with better health and greater opportunity;

It is a Conservative Government
that will make the UK the best place in the world to be trained, work or
start
a business;

And it is the Conservatives and
Boris Johnson who will get Brexit done, secure our future prosperity and make
sure Jeremy Corbyn never gets the keys to No 10."

ENDS