

Prime Minister: Our future is in our hands

Theresa

May, the Prime Minister, speaking today at Conservative Party Conference at The ICC, Birmingham, said:

(Check against delivery)

“Thank you very much for that warm welcome.

You’ll have to excuse me if I cough during this speech; I’ve been up all night supergluing the backdrop.

There are some things about last year’s conference I have tried to forget.

But I will always remember the warmth I felt from everyone in the hall.

You supported me all the way – thank you.

NO LIMIT TO WHAT WE CAN ACHIEVE

This year marks a century since the end of the First World War.

Just a few hundred yards from this conference centre stands a Hall of Memory, built to honour the sacrifice of men and women from this city in that terrible conflict.

Inscribed within it are some familiar words:

‘AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN, AND IN THE MORNING, WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.’

We do remember them.

We remember the young men who left their homes to fight and die in the mud and horror of the trenches.

We
remember the sailors who shovelled coal into hellfire furnaces in the bowels
of
battleships.

We
remember the selflessness of a remarkable generation, whose legacy is the
freedom we enjoy today.

I
think of Hubert Grant – my father's cousin in whose honour he was named.

Hubert
fought and died at Passchendaele at the age of just 19.

Last
year, at the service to mark the centenary of that battle, I took a moment to
find his name on the Menin Gate, alongside thousands of his comrades.

We
will remember them.

But
the builders of that Hall of Memory also wanted us to do something else.

Alongside
a commitment to remember, they inscribed a command that still calls to us
today:

'SEE
TO IT THAT THEY SHALL NOT HAVE SUFFERED AND DIED IN VAIN.'

Those
words express a determination that transformed our country.

A
determination that the men who returned from the quagmires of Passchendaele
to
their families, here in Birmingham and across the land, should have homes fit
for heroes.

That
the women who made munitions, kept the buses and trains running, served as
firefighters and police officers, should have a voice in our democracy.

That
a country which stood together in solidarity, with people of every class
sharing the danger, should become a fairer place.

A
generation later, another victory built on shared sacrifice renewed that
determination.

Twice
in a century, Britain came together to beat the odds and build a better
future.

A
stronger democracy in the Mother of Parliaments – where every person, no
matter
their gender, no matter their class, has an equal voice.

A
fairer economy in the home of the free market – where enterprise creates
wealth
to fund great public services.

A
more secure future in the post-war world – where former enemies become
friends
and the trans-Atlantic alliance makes our world a safer place.

We
must recapture that spirit of common purpose.

Because
the lesson of that remarkable generation is clear: if we come together, there
is no limit to what we can achieve.

Our
future is in our hands.

SOMETHING WRONG WITH POLITICS

And
that is why we are all in this hall today.

It
is the reason we chose to get involved in politics in the first place.

We
believe that by standing up to be counted, by working together, we can change
our communities and our country for the better.

It's
not always glamorous.

I've
seen the trailers for 'Bodyguard' and let me tell you – it wasn't like that
in
my day.

Real
politics involves a lot of hard graft.

Knocking

on doors in all weathers.

Delivering
bundles of leaflets.

We
do it because we believe in its potential to transform lives.

We
understood when we got involved that sometimes it's adversarial.

But
in the last few years something's changed for the worse.

I
feel it. I am sure you do too.

Rigorous
debate between political opponents is becoming more like a confrontation
between enemies.

People
who put themselves forward to serve are becoming targets.

Not
just them, their families as well.

We
all saw the sickening pictures of a far-left extremist shouting abuse at
Jacob
Rees-Mogg's children

And
it's not only Conservatives who are facing abuse.

The
first black woman ever to be elected to the House of Commons receives more
racist and misogynist messages today than when she first stood over 30 years
ago.

You
do not have to agree with a word Diane Abbott says to believe passionately in
her right to say it, free from threats and abuse.

Some
people have lost sight of the fact that political differences are not
everything.

I
have served in local and national government, in office and in opposition.

I
know that no party has a monopoly on good ideas.

That
getting things done requires working together – within parties and beyond
them.

When
our politics becomes polarised, and compromise becomes a dirty word, that
becomes harder.

And
good people are put off public service.

It
doesn't have to be this way.

Our
Party has more elected representatives than any other.

We
have in our hands the power to set a standard of decency that will be an
example for others to follow.

John
McCain, who spoke at this conference 12 years ago, put it like this:

'We
argue and compete and sometimes even vilify each other in our raucous public
debates. But we have always had so much more in common with each other than
in
disagreement.'

That
was Jo Cox's message too.

It
is a truth that the British people instinctively understand.

Because
they are not ideologues.

They
know we all have a common stake in this country and that the only path to a
better future is one that we walk down together.

So,
let's rise above the abuse.

Let's
make a positive case for our values that will cut through the bitterness and
bile that is poisoning our politics.

Let's
say it loud and clear: Conservatives will always stand up for a politics that
unites us rather than divides us.

THE JEREMY CORBYN PARTY

That
used to be Labour's position too.

But
when I look at its leadership today, I worry it's no longer the case.

We
all remember what the Labour Party used to be.

We
passionately disagreed with many of their policies.

Every
Labour Government left unemployment higher than they found it.

Every
Labour Government ran out of other people's money to spend.

Every
Labour Government left the economy in a mess.

But
at least they had some basic qualities that everyone could respect.

They
were proud of our institutions.

They
were proud of our armed forces.

They
were proud of Britain.

Today,
when I look across at the opposition benches, I can still see that Labour
Party.

The
heirs of Hugh Gaitskell and Barbara Castle, Dennis Healy and John Smith.

But
not on the front bench.

Instead
their faces stare blankly out from the rows behind, while another party
occupies prime position: the Jeremy Corbyn Party.

The
Jeremy Corbyn Party rejects the common values that once bridged our political
divide.

Compare

Jeremy Corbyn's behaviour to that of his predecessors.

Would

Neil Kinnock, who stood-up to the hard-left, have stood by while his own MPs faced deselection, and needed police protection at their Party conference?

Would

Jim Callaghan, who served in the Royal Navy, have asked the Russian government to confirm the findings of our own intelligence agencies?

Would

Clement Attlee, Churchill's trusted deputy during the Second World War, have told British Jews they didn't know the meaning of antisemitism?

What

has befallen Labour is a national tragedy.

What

has it come to when Jewish families today seriously discuss where they should go if Jeremy Corbyn becomes Prime Minister?

When

a leading Labour MP says his party is 'institutionally racist'?

When

the Leader of the Labour Party is happy to appear on Iranian state TV, but attacks our free media here in Britain?

That

is what Jeremy Corbyn has done to the Labour Party.

It

is our duty, in this Conservative Party, to make sure he can never do it to our country.

PARTY FOR THE WHOLE COUNTRY

To

do that we need to be a Party for the whole country.

Because

today millions of people, who have never supported our Party in the past, are appalled by what Jeremy Corbyn has done to Labour.

They

want to support a party that is decent, moderate, and patriotic.

One

that puts the national interest first.

Delivers
on the issues they care about.

And
is comfortable with modern Britain in all its diversity.

We
must show everyone in this country that we are that Party.

A
Party that conserves the best of our inheritance, but is not afraid of
change.

A
party of patriotism, but not nationalism.

A
party that believes in business, but is not afraid to hold businesses to
account.

A
party that believes in the good that government can do, but knows government
will never have all the answers.

A party that believes your success in life
should not be defined by who you love, your faith, the colour of your skin,
who
your parents were, or where you were raised – but by your talent and your
hard
work.

Above
all a party of Unionism, not just of four proud nations, but of all our
people.

A
party not for the few, not even for the many, but for everyone who is willing
to work hard and do their best.

SECURITY. FREEDOM. OPPORTUNITY.

And
we must be a party that is not in thrall to ideology, but motivated instead
by
enduring principles.

For
me they can be summed-up in three words: Security. Freedom. Opportunity.

Security
for the nation with strong defences against threats from abroad, and
protection
against threats at home.

Security

for communities, upheld by the brave men and women of our police forces.

Security

for individuals and families, provided by a good job, a home of your own, and dignity in old age.

And

security is the bedrock of freedom.

Freedom

of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of action.

The

freedom to make decisions for yourself, rather than have them made for you by government.

The

freedom that our grandparents and great grandparents fought for against tyranny.

The

freedom that swept across Eastern Europe when the Soviet Union collapsed, and nations were reborn in sovereignty and independence.

The

freedom that is still denied to many in our world today.

But

with freedom should always come responsibility.

To

obey the law, even when you disagree with it.

To

conserve our environment, for the next generation.

And

most especially for those in public life – the responsibility to weigh the impact our words and actions have on other people.

And

if we are secure and we are free, then opportunity is opened-up.

The

opportunity to take your future in your hands. To dream, and strive, and achieve a better life.

To

know that if your dad arrived on a plane from Pakistan, you can become Home Secretary.

That

if you spent time in care, you can be in the Cabinet.

That

if your grandparents came to our shores as part of the Windrush generation
you
could be the next Mayor of London.

That

if you are pregnant with your first child and engaged to your girlfriend, you
could be the next First Minister of Scotland.

We,

the Conservative Party, are the party of opportunity.

LONG-TERM PLAN FOR THE NHS

No

institution embodies our principles as Conservatives more profoundly or more
personally than our National Health Service.

It

gives every man, woman and child the absolute security of knowing that
whenever
you are sick, care will be there.

What

greater freedom than to live your life never having to worry about whether
you
can afford the treatment you need?

What

greater opportunity for a country to make the most of all its talents?

The

NHS is a service that is there for everyone; free at the point of use; with
care based always on clinical need, never the ability to pay.

These

principles are in our country's DNA.

And

Conservatives will always uphold them.

Indeed,

Conservatives have looked after our NHS for most of its life.

And

this year we gave the NHS a seventieth birthday present to be proud of: the
biggest cash boost in its history.

An

extra £394 million every single week.

And

in return, the NHS will produce a new long-term plan to make sure every penny makes a difference on the front line.

So,

next time you hear someone say that the Tories don't care about the NHS, tell them about that extra funding.

Tell

them about the Conservative MPs who work in the NHS in their spare time.

Tell

them about the Tory Prime Minister who can only do her job thanks to the wonderful staff of her local NHS trust, who help her manage diabetes.

Tell

them about our Housing Secretary, James Brokenshire.

Last

year James officially opened the new Guy's Cancer Centre at Queen Mary's Hospital in his constituency.

A

few months later he was a patient.

The

outstanding NHS care he received helped him recover, and now he is back serving in the Cabinet.

Cancer

can strike any of us at any time.

A

few years ago, my goddaughter was diagnosed with cancer.

She

underwent treatment and it seemed to be working.

But

then the cancer came back.

Last

summer, she sent me a text to tell me that she was hoping to see another Christmas.

But

she didn't make it.

Half

of us will be diagnosed with cancer. All of us know someone who has been.

Survival

rates are increasing, but we are lagging behind other countries.

So
today I can announce a new Cancer Strategy, funded through our 70th birthday investment, will form a central part of our long-term plan for the NHS.

The
key to boosting your chance of surviving cancer is early diagnosis.

Five-year
survival rates for bowel cancer are over 90% if caught early, but less than 10% if diagnosed late.

Through
our Cancer Strategy, we will increase the early detection rate from one-in-two today, to-three-in four by 2028.

We
will do it by lowering the age at which we screen for bowel cancer from 60 to 50.

By
investing in the very latest scanners.

And
by building more Rapid Diagnostic Centres – one stop-shops that help people get treatment quicker.

This
will be a step-change in how we diagnose cancer.

It
will mean that by 2028, 55,000 more people will be alive five years after their diagnosis compared to today.

Every
life saved means precious extra years with friends and family.

Every
life saved means a parent, a partner, a child, a god mother spared the pain of losing a loved one before their time.

PUTTING THE NATIONAL INTEREST FIRST

Our
NHS saves countless lives every day.

That

is never more true than when our national security is threatened.

Those
are the times when I feel most keenly the responsibilities of my office.

When
I have to ask our brave servicemen and women to put themselves in harm's way.

To
protect our citizens.

To
support our allies, as we would expect them to support us.

To
uphold the international rules on which our security depends.

Like
when the Syrian regime attacked Douma with chemical weapons, killing innocent
men, women and children.

We
joined with our friends to send a message that the use of chemical weapons
will
never be tolerated.

I
took the decision to send RAF jets to strike against Assad's chemical weapons
facilities.

As
Prime Minister, I had to make the call, and then be held to account for it.

The
same was true when Russia launched a chemical attack on the streets of the
United Kingdom.

I
took the decision to expel 23 Russian diplomats who were undeclared
intelligence officers.

Our
allies joined with us in degrading Russia's intelligence network.

In
Parliament I received almost universal support – from the SNP to the Liberal
Democrats and the Labour backbenches.

There
was just one dissenting voice – Jeremy Corbyn.

Dismissing
the findings of our security services.

Suggesting

that the country responsible for the attack should double-check the findings of our chemical weapons scientists.

Refusing

to lay the blame squarely where it belonged.

Just

imagine if he were Prime Minister.

He

says Britain should disarm herself in the hope others follow suit.

I

say no – we must keep our defences strong to keep our country safe.

He

says a strong NATO simply provokes Russia.

I

say no – it is the guarantor of our freedom and security.

He

poses as a humanitarian. But he says that military action to save lives is only justified with the approval of the Security Council – effectively giving Russia a veto.

I

say no – we cannot outsource our conscience to the Kremlin.

HONOURING THE REFERENDUM

Leadership

is doing what you believe to be right and having the courage and determination to see it through.

That

is the approach I have taken on Brexit.

We

have had disagreements in this Party about Britain's membership of the EU for a long time.

So,

it is no surprise that we have had a range of different views expressed this week.

But

my job as Prime Minister is to do what I believe to be in the national interest.

And
that means two things.

First,
honouring the result of the referendum.

MPs
asked the British people to take this decision.

We
put our faith in their judgement.

They
have put their faith in us to deliver.

I
will not let them down.

And
secondly, to seek a good trading and security relationship with our
neighbours
after we have left.

They
are our close friends and allies, and we should ensure it stays that way.

That's
what I said at Lancaster House.

It's
what we promised in our manifesto.

And
it's what I've worked day and night for the last two years to achieve.

No-one
wants a good deal more than me.

But
that has never meant getting a deal at any cost.

Britain
isn't afraid to leave with no deal if we have to.

But
we need to be honest about it.

Leaving
without a deal – introducing tariffs and costly checks at the border – would
be

a bad outcome for the UK and the EU.

It would be tough at first, but the resilience and ingenuity of the British people would see us through.

Some people ask me to rule out no deal.

But if I did that I would weaken our negotiating position and have to agree to whatever the EU offers.

And at the moment that would mean accepting one of two things.

Either a deal that keeps us in the EU in all but name, keeps free movement, keeps vast annual payments and stops us signing trade deals with other countries.

Or a deal that carves off Northern Ireland, a part of this country, effectively leaving it in the EU's Custom's Union.

So, let us send a clear message from this hall today: we will never accept either of those choices.

We will not betray the result of the referendum.

And we will never break up our country.

I have treated the EU with nothing but respect. The UK expects the same.

OUR PROPOSAL

In a negotiation, if you can't accept what the other side proposes, you present an alternative.

That is what we have done.

Our proposal is for a free trade deal that provides for frictionless trade in goods.

It would protect hundreds of thousands of jobs in the just-in-time supply chains our manufacturing firms rely on.

Businesses wouldn't face costly checks when they export to the EU, so they can invest with confidence.

And it would protect our precious Union – the seamless border in Northern Ireland, a bedrock of peace and stability, would see no change whatsoever.

No simple free trade agreement could achieve that, not even one that makes use of the very latest technology.

Our proposal would be good for our rural communities, getting us out of the Common Agricultural Policy.

It would be good for our coastal communities.

We would be out of the Common Fisheries Policy, an independent coastal state once again.

And with the UK's biggest fishing fleets based in Scotland, let me say this to Nicola Sturgeon.

You claim to stand up for Scotland, but you want to lock Scottish fishermen into the CFP forever.

That's not 'Stronger for Scotland', it's a betrayal of Scotland.

Our proposal would mean we could renew our role in the world, strike new trade deals with other countries.

With control of our money, we can spend more on our NHS.

With control of our laws, we can bring decision-making closer to the people and returning powers to Westminster, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast.

And
with control of our borders, we can do something that no British government
has
been able to do in decades – restore full and complete control of who comes
into this country to the democratically elected representatives of the
British
people.

And
this is what we will do with the immigration powers we take back.

The
free movement of people will end, once and for all.

In
its place we will introduce a new system.

It
will be based on what skills you have to offer, not which country you come
from.

Throughout
our history, migrants have made a huge contribution to our country – and they
will continue to in the future.

Those
with the skills we need, who want to come here and work hard, will find a
welcome.

But
we will be able to reduce the numbers, as we promised.

And
by ending free movement we will give British business an incentive to train
our
own young people and to invest in technology that will improve their
productivity.

So
this is our proposal. Taking back control of our borders, laws and money.

Good
for jobs, good for the Union.

It
delivers on the referendum.

It
keeps faith with the British people.

It
is in the national interest.

TIME TO COME TOGETHER

Even
if we do not all agree on every part of this proposal, we need to come together.

Because
it's time we faced up to what is at risk.

We
have a Labour Party that, if they were in Government, would accept any deal the
EU chose to offer, regardless of how bad it is for the UK.

But
who also say they'll oppose any deal I choose to bring back, regardless of
how
good it is for the UK.

They
are not acting in the national interest, but their own political interest.

And
there are plenty of prominent people in British politics – in Parliament and
out of it – who want to stop Brexit in its tracks.

Their
latest plan is to hold a second referendum.

They
call it a 'People's Vote'.

But
we had the people's vote. The people voted to leave.

A
second referendum would be a "politicians' vote": politicians telling people
they got it wrong the first time and should try again.

Think
for a moment what it would do to faith in our democracy if – having asked the
people of this country to take this decision – politicians tried to overturn
it.

Those
of us who do respect the result – whichever side of the question we stood on
two years ago – need to come together now.

If
we don't – if we all go off in different directions in pursuit of our own
visions of the perfect Brexit – we risk ending up with no Brexit at all.

And

there's another reason why we need to come together.

We
are entering the toughest phase of the negotiations.

You
saw in Salzburg that I am standing up for Britain.

What
we are proposing is very challenging for the EU.

But
if we stick together and hold our nerve I know we can get a deal that
delivers
for Britain.

A BREXIT THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE

And
ultimately that's what it's all about.

The
people we serve are not interested in debates about the theory of Brexit –
their livelihoods depend on making a success of it in practice.

A
Brexit that might make Britain stronger fifty years from now is no good to
you
if it makes your life harder today.

If
you work in a factory in Pendle, you need a Brexit that keeps trade
friction-free and supply-chains flowing.

If
you are a fisherman in Peterhead, you need a Brexit that delivers full
control
of our waters.

If
you run an exporting business in Penarth, you need a Brexit that will open up
new global markets.

If
you live in Pettigo on the Irish border, you need a Brexit that keeps it
frictionless and communities connected.

These
things matter to you – so they matter to me.

You
are the people we are all here to serve.

And
together we will build a brighter future for the whole United Kingdom.

A MOMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

I
passionately believe that our best days lie ahead of us and that our future
is
full of promise.

We
have fundamental strengths as a country.

English
is the global language.

We
can trade with Shanghai over morning coffee and San Francisco at tea time.

Our
courts are incorruptible.

Our
universities, world-leading.

Our
soft power, unrivalled.

A
driving force in the Commonwealth.

A
permanent member of the UN Security Council.

And
soon we will retake our own seat at the World Trade Organisation.

Britain
will be a champion for free trade right across the globe – and I want to
thank
our fantastic trade envoys for leading that work.

But
our greatest strength of all is the talent and diversity of our people.

We
have produced more Nobel Prize winners than any country apart from America.

We
are home to amazing innovators, creators, and entrepreneurs.

Our
wonderful public servants are the best in the world.

The
compassion of our NHS staff, the dedication of our teachers, the bravery of
our
police, and the matchless courage of our armed forces.

Don't
let anyone tell you we don't have what it takes: we have everything we need
to
succeed.

And
in 2022 we will put the best of British creativity and innovation, culture
and
heritage on show in a year-long festival of Great Britain and Northern
Ireland.

Wherever
I travel, I find a renewed interest in Britain.

Let
me give you one example.

Last
month I became the first British Prime Minister to visit Kenya in 30 years.

This
is a Commonwealth partner, a nation of over 50 million people, on a continent
that will be an engine-room of economic growth in the years ahead.

Their
message to me was clear: our businesses want to trade with you.

Our
young people want to study with you.

Our
scientists and artists want to collaborate with you.

Yet
I was the first Prime Minister to visit since Margaret Thatcher.

There
is a whole world out there. Let's lift our horizons to meet it.

THE POWER OF FREE MARKETS

The
UK has always been an outward-looking trading nation.

And
as Conservatives, we believe in the power of a well-regulated free market –
the
greatest agent of collective human progress ever devised.

In
the last 30 years, extreme poverty has been cut in half.

Global
life expectancy has increased by nearly 20 years.

Child
mortality has halved.

But
the free market hasn't just saved lives, it has improved them: the internet, smartphones, cheap air travel, electric cars, even flat-pack furniture.

We
should defend free markets, because it is ordinary working people who benefit.

Closed
markets and command economies were not overthrown by powerful elites, but by ordinary people.

By
the shipyard workers of Gdańsk, who led the resistance in Poland.

By
people of all backgrounds who took part in the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia.

By
the people of East Berlin, who tore down that wall.

These
were the many, not the few.

And
when the many have the freedom to choose, they choose freedom.

I
saw it last month in South Africa.

I
was speaking to some inspiring young people, full of fire and hope for their futures.

Some
told me they wanted to be doctors, others lawyers.

I
think some might even have been inspired to become professional dancers.

Perhaps
not.

But
one young woman said something else.

She
told me her ambition was to start a business, so she could create jobs in her
local community.

The
people in this hall who have started their own businesses will know how
thrilling it is to take a risk and start something new.

But
offering someone a job – creating opportunity for other people – is one of
the
most socially-responsible things you can do.

It
is an act of public service as noble as any other.

To
everyone who has done it – we are all in your debt.

So,
we in this party, we in this hall, we say thank you.

And
to all businesses – large and small – you may have heard that there is a
four-letter word to describe what we Conservatives want to do to you.

It
has a single syllable. It is of Anglo-Saxon derivation. It ends in the letter
'K'.

Back
business.

Back
them to create jobs and build prosperity.

Back
them to drive innovation and improve lives.

Back
them with the lowest Corporation Tax in the G20.

Britain,
under my Conservative Government, is open for business.

TEN YEARS ON

We
support free markets because we know their strengths.

But
we also know their limits.

The
defining event for a new generation of voters was not the fall of the Berlin
Wall, but the collapse of the banks.

It
was the biggest market failure in our lifetimes.

A
recession in which almost three quarters of a million jobs were lost.

Sound
businesses forced to close because they could not access credit.

People
queuing to withdraw their money from Northern Rock.

Thanks
to Labour, the country was not prepared.

The
government ended up borrowing £1 for every £4 it spent.

It
fell to our party to clear up the mess.

Eight
years on, how have we done?

Our
economy is growing.

The
deficit down by four-fifths.

Unemployment
at its lowest since the 1970s.

Youth
unemployment at a record low.

Households
where nobody works down by almost a million.

We
should not forget what's behind those numbers.

The
parent who swaps a benefit cheque for a regular wage.

The
youngster leaving school and never having to sign on.

The
children growing up with an example of hard work.

Hope
and dignity for millions of people in our country.

We
should be proud of our record.

But
our pride in those achievements should not blind us to the challenges that remain.

The
after-effects of the crash are still being felt – in four important ways.

Some
markets are still not working in the interests of ordinary people.

Employment
is up, but too many people haven't had a decent pay rise.

The
deficit is down, but achieving that has been painful.

And
our economy is growing, but some communities have been left behind.

This
is why some people still feel that our economy isn't working for them.

Our
mission as Conservatives must be to show them that we can build an economy
that
does.

LABOUR'S FALSE HOPE

In
Liverpool last week, all Labour offered were bogus solutions that would make
things worse.

Ideas
that might seem attractive at first glance, but which would hurt the very
people they claim to help.

Their
flagship announcement was a case in point.

It
would mean the government effectively confiscating a tenth of every company
with more than 250 employees.

Workers

wouldn't become shareholders – and much of the income generated would end up with the government.

They

dress it up as employee ownership, but it's a giant stealth tax on enterprise.

It

would slash the share prices of British businesses, hitting anyone with a private pension.

And

it would make the UK an unattractive place to invest, driving away business, destroying jobs.

The

same is true of their nationalisation policy.

They

want our railways and utilities to be owned entirely by the Government.

But

when you nationalise something, people pay for it twice – once when they use the service, and again every month through their taxes.

And

investment in them goes down, because when governments are setting budgets, they will always choose schools and hospitals over reservoirs and railways, so people get a worse service.

Even

some in the Labour Party admit their programme of nationalisation, and their endless expensive promises, would cost £1 trillion.

You

heard me right – one thousand billion pounds.

That

is not government money but your money.

Because

Labour would have to pay for it by raising taxes higher and higher.

Of

course, everyone should pay their fair share.

But

when you raise taxes too high, businesses cannot afford to invest.

They

cannot afford to take on new employees.

Eventually,
they cannot afford to operate here at all.

They
move abroad, create jobs in other countries, pay taxes somewhere else, and
leave us poorer.

They
would also have to increase borrowing again.

We
already spend more each year on debt interest than we do on our schools.

After
all the sacrifices we have made, they would take us back to square one.

These
ideas won't help people who are struggling, they will hurt them.

Hurt
workers, whose jobs would go as businesses left Britain.

Hurt
pensioners, whose savings would be devalued.

And
hurt young people, whose future Labour would mortgage.

FIXING BROKEN MARKETS

However
bad the Labour approach is, we must do more than criticise it.

We
need to show what this Conservative government is doing to address people's
concerns.

First,
we need to make markets work in the interests of ordinary people again.

That's
why we toughened up our corporate governance rules.

We
are giving workers a stronger voice in the boardroom.

We
have changed the rules on bonuses, so bosses are rewarded for long-term
performance, not short-term profit.

It's
why, with the gig economy changing how people work, we are changing our
employment rules, so new technology cannot undermine workers' rights.

It's
why we introduced the energy price cap.

Announced
at last year's conference, and in place for this winter.

It
will stop energy firms charging their most loyal customers unfair prices.

Any
other companies charging their customers a 'loyalty penalty' should know: we
will take action.

Because
we put the interest of consumers first, we have also announced a fundamental
review into our railways.

Since
privatisation, investment in the network has gone up, safety has improved,
and
more people are travelling by rail than ever before.

But
on some routes the service has not been good enough. We will fix that.

And
while we do so, we will bring in a new system of auto-compensation, so that
when your train is late you won't have to waste more time getting your money
back.

Last
year I made it my personal mission to fix another broken market: housing.

We
cannot make the case for capitalism if ordinary working people have no chance
of owning capital.

To
put the dream of home ownership back within their reach, we scrapped stamp
duty
for most first-time buyers – and over 120,000 households have already
benefited.

We've
helped half a million people onto the housing ladder through other schemes
like
Help to Buy.

And
this week we have announced that we will charge a higher rate of stamp duty
on
those buying homes who do not live and pay taxes in the UK, to help level the
playing field for British buyers.

The
money raised will go towards tackling the scourge of rough sleeping.

But
the truth is that while these measures will help in the short term, we will only fix this broken market by building more homes.

And
that is what we are doing.

More
new homes were added to our stock last year than in all but one of the last
30
years.

But
we need to do better still.

The
last time Britain was building enough homes – half a century ago – local
councils made a big contribution.

We've
opened-up the £9 billion Affordable Housing Programme to councils, to get
them
building again.

And
at last year's conference I announced an additional £2 billion for affordable
housing.

But
something is still holding many of them back.

There
is a government cap on how much they can borrow against their Housing Revenue
Account assets to fund new developments.

Solving
the housing crisis is the biggest domestic policy challenge of our
generation.

It
doesn't make sense to stop councils from playing their part in solving it.

So
today I can announce that we are scrapping that cap.

We
will help you get on the housing ladder.

And
we will build the homes this country needs.

COST OF LIVING

Our
next challenge is to help working people with the cost of living.

We
know how hard people work to make ends meet and provide for their families.

It
isn't easy. It never has been.

And
the difference it makes to have a little bit of money left to put away at the
end of each month isn't measured in pounds and pence.

It's
the look on a daughter's face when her mum says she can have the bike she
wants
for her birthday.

It's
the joy and precious memories that a week's holiday with the family brings.

It's
the peace of mind that comes with having some savings.

Many
people, in towns and cities across our country, cannot take these things for
granted.

They
are the people this party exists for.

They
are the people for whom this party must deliver.

It's
for them that we cut income tax.

Introduced
a National Living Wage.

Extended
free childcare.

And
froze fuel duty every year.

Because
for millions of people, their car is not a luxury. It's a necessity.

Some
have wondered if there would be a thaw in our policy this year.

Today

I can confirm, given the high oil price, the Chancellor will freeze fuel duty once again in his budget later this month.

Money

in the pockets of hard-working people.

A

Conservative Government that is on their side.

END OF AUSTERITY

Third,

after a decade of austerity, people need to know that their hard work has paid off.

Because

of that hard work, and the decisions taken by the Chancellor, our national debt is starting to fall for the first time in a generation.

This

is a historic achievement.

But

getting to this turning point wasn't easy.

Public

sector workers had their wages frozen.

Local

services had to do more with less.

And

families felt the squeeze.

Fixing

our finances was necessary.

There

must be no return to the uncontrolled borrowing of the past.

No

undoing all the progress of the last eight years.

No

taking Britain back to square one.

But

the British people need to know that the end is in sight.

And

our message to them must be this: we get it.

We
are not just a party to clean up a mess, we are the party to steer a course
to
a better future.

Sound
finances are essential, but they are not the limit of our ambition.

Because
you made sacrifices, there are better days ahead.

So,
when we've secured a good Brexit deal for Britain, at the Spending Review
next
year we will set out our approach for the future.

Debt
as a share of the economy will continue to go down, support for public
services
will go up.

Because,
a decade after the financial crash, people need to know that the austerity it
led to is over and that their hard work has paid off.

AN ECONOMY OF THE FUTURE

The
final challenge is about the future we want for our economy.

We
stand on the threshold of technological changes that will transform how we
live
and work, travel and communicate.

This
has the potential to improve the lives of everyone in society, but only if we
take the right decisions now.

At
times of change in the past, the benefits have not been evenly spread.

Some
communities have been left behind. This time it must be different.

Because
we are all worse off when any part of us is held back.

That
means doing things differently.

Our
Modern Industrial Strategy is helping the whole country get ready for the
economic change that is coming.

We
are investing in infrastructure.

We
are doing more than anyone since the Victorians to upgrade our railways.

Our
road-building programme is the largest since the 1970s.

We
have taken the big decision to build a third runway at Heathrow.

We
are driving up research spending— so we can be the ideas factory of the
future.

We
are investing in our workforce – helping people train and retrain.

In
our schools, we are keeping standards high.

And
where Labour want to roll-back reform, scrap academies and kill off free
schools, we will build more of them, because every child deserves a great
start
in life.

Every
child, in every town and city, across the whole country.

So
that is our Conservative answer.

Fixing
markets not destroying them.

Helping
with the cost of living.

Ending
austerity.

An
economy of the future with nowhere left behind.

This
is how we will build a country that works for everyone.

I
made that my mission when I stood for the leadership.

It
was what I dedicated my government to on the steps of Downing Street.

And
it is the future this Party will deliver.

OUR FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

Every
person in this hall has the power to shape that future.

This
is a moment of opportunity for our party.

To
champion decency in our politics.

To
be the moderate, patriotic government this country needs.

To
be a party not for the few, not even for the many, but for everyone who works hard and plays by the rules.

And
it's a moment of opportunity for our country.

To
honour the result of the referendum.

To
come together to make a success of the decision we took.

To
build the homes we need.

To
get the next generation on the housing ladder.

To
help people who are struggling to make ends meet.

To
invest in our vital public services.

To
renew our precious National Health Service.

To
lead the world in the technologies of the future.

To
ensure every family and every community shares the success.

To
tackle the burning injustices that hold people back.

We
stand at a pivotal moment in our history.

It
falls to our party to lead our country through it.

When
we come together there is no limit to what we can achieve.

Ours
is a great country.

Our
future is in our hands.

Together,
let's seize it.

Together,
let's build a better Britain."

ENDS.

For further information, please contact the Press
Office on 020 7984 8121.