

Beat: Politics

Prime Minister David Cameron

Speech to the Conservative Spring Forum

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USPA NEWS - Prime Minister David Cameron: Spring conference speech in full.

Speaking today at the annual Conservative Party Spring Forum at the old Granada Studios in Manchester, Prime Minister David Cameron said:

The countdown is on.

Just over a month. Less than six weeks. 40 days.

That's all we've got to tell the people of Britain what this election means.

40 days to say this isn't any old election"

"|this is a high stakes, high risk election"|

"|that it's about the chances your children will have. The jobs you will do. The security you will have. The kind of country we live in.

40 days to say this is a knife-edge election "" and it can only be cut two ways.

Conservatives "" or Labour.

Britain on the rise "" or turning the clock back.

That's the choice.

And it's a choice of teams.

Ask it on the door-step"| who do you want running the country?

When the global economy is still uncertain"|

"|when Greece is on the precipice, the Euro in flux"|

"|who do you want in the Treasury?

Ed Balls "" the man who messed up our economy, bust our banks, bankrupted our finances?

Or do you want the man who helped make Britain the fastest-growing major economy in the developed world"|

"|who's had pats on the back from the IMF, the OECD and President Obama"|

"|who turned a Great Recession into a Great Revival"|

"|our very own George Osborne.

At a time when jihadists are plotting to hurt us, when security is more important than ever“;

“|who do you want in the Home Office?

Yvette Cooper ““ who puts the moaning of left-wing commentators ahead of our security services“;

“|or the woman who gives our amazing intelligence services what they need“;

“|who’s closed down the bogus immigration colleges“;

“|who’s got crime down to record lows“;

“|who told Abu Hamza to sling his hook.

Our brilliant Home Secretary: Theresa May.

And when it comes to reforming welfare and getting a generation back to work“;

“|who do you want?

Rachel Reeves and Labour ““ who have opposed all the welfare reforms we’ve made, who want to bring back something-for-nothing“;

“|or the man on a moral mission“;

“|the man with an unshakeable resolve to get people in work, give them dignity, give them hope, come what may“;

“|I.D.S: I. Don’t. Surrender.

I tell you what.

When I look around that Cabinet table, I know our country is in safe hands“;

“|and the alternative just does not bear thinking about.

And when it comes to party leaders, people need to be clear.

Only one of us can walk through that door in Downing Street.

It’ll either be me ““ or it’ll be Ed Miliband.

Now five years in this job teaches you some things.

I know what this role needs ““ and frankly, I don’t think Ed Miliband has it.

Some might say “don’t make this personal““;

“|but when it comes to who’s Prime Minister, the personal is national.

The guy who forgot to mention the deficit could be the one in charge of our whole economy.

The man who is too weak to stand up to the trade unions at home could be the one facing down our enemies abroad.

The leader who thinks leadership is climbing aboard the latest bandwagon ““ he could be the one taking the make-or-break calls in the

middle of the night.

Now I don't claim to be perfect.

I haven't got everything right.

But I have always tried to do what's right for our country long-term.

And that's why I'm shocked by what the Labour Party are trying to do today.

They want to crawl up Downing Street on the coat-tails of the SNP.

Salmond and Miliband.

The SNP and Labour.

The people who want to break up our country "" and the people who want to bankrupt our country""

{}friends "" we can never, ever let that happen.

PLANS

So this is a choice about teams "" and it's a choice on plans too.

Our long-term economic plan is working""

{}beyond doubt, beyond dispute, beyond argument""

{}and you know what is almost beyond belief?

Labour want to tear it all up.

More borrowing, more spending, more debt "" more of the things that got us into this mess in the first place.

This is the choice.

Between their disastrous recipe for recession and debt and misery""

{}or our long-term economic plan that is turning Britain around.

You can see its effects stretching right across our country.

Unemployment has fallen in every region.

We've had Sunderland making more cars than Italy""

{}Dundee exporting more video games than Denmark""

{}the great county of Yorkshire creating more jobs than the whole of France.

Here in Manchester and across the North we're building a Northern Powerhouse to take on the great cities of the world.

We're seeing record numbers of businesses.

Record numbers of apprenticeships.

The deficit cut in half.

1.9 million more people in work.

And last year "" the fastest growing major economy in the Western World.

To those who say: but the job isn't finished, there's more to be done, I say "" yes "" you're right"

"|and that's why we need to stick to the plan for the next five years, with the team who have made all this happen.

As President Obama said "" Britain must be doing something right.

Yes it is, Barack: it's being run by the Conservatives.

WE'RE WITH YOU

But friends: none of this matters unless it makes a difference to people's lives.

Our long-term economic plan is not dry and dusty words on a page"

"|it's about being true to the values of this country.

Making Britain a place where if you put in, you will get out.

And here again there is a vital choice to make on May 7th.

As Conservatives we know what makes our hearts beat faster "" it's those who try over and over again, who put the effort in, who put the hours in"

"|the quiet, unsung, brilliant majority of British people who just want to build a better life for themselves, their children and their communities.

To all these people "" our long-term economic plan is all about you.

Decent jobs for you. Solid homes for you to own. Good schools for your children, a pension that gives you dignity in old age.

We're saying to the young couple who are saving each month "" we are with you.

To the teenager who wants an apprenticeship "" we are with you.

To the pensioner who put money aside for decades "" we are with you.

This is the point, the purpose, the whole reason for the Conservative party"

"|the core of our plan, the crux of our policies"

"|to say to the hardworking people of this country: "we are with you." [2]

LABOUR

And what is Labour's message? Who are they with? What are they for?

What is the point of them?

To be honest, it's increasingly hard to tell.

They're not the party of Clement Attlee, who built the NHS"

"|they're the party that wants to "weaponise" the NHS.

They're not the party of Wilson and his "white heat of technology"

"|they're the party with not a single idea about Britain's industrial future.

Just last week they were threatening to rip up the plans for high speed rail between Manchester and Birmingham.

What's more, they don't have a single good thing to say about wealth creators"

"|in fact "" the party that cannot remember the name of a single businessman.

They're not even the party of John Smith either "" who believed so passionately in the dignity of work"

"|they're the party who have opposed everything we have done to get nearly a million people off welfare and into a better life.

No longer the Labour party but the welfare party"

"|the party whose shining city on a hill, whose new Jerusalem is a load of dead-end lives and poverty handed down through the generations"

"|what a betrayal of everything that party once stood for.

There must be Labour supporters up and down this country who work hard, pay their taxes, see the abuse of the welfare system and Labour's defence of it and think: "how did it come to this?"

The truth is that Miliband's Labour Party isn't about liberating working people "" it's about telling you what to do.

The same old condescending, bossy, interfering, we-know-best attitude of the Hampstead socialist down the ages.

People say "we want to keep more of our hard-earned money"?"

"|Labour say: "no "" we know how to spend it better than you."?"

People say: "we want to send our children to good, new free schools"?"

"|Labour say: "no "" it doesn't fit with our ideology."?"

People say: "we want to buy our council house through Right to Buy"?"

“|Labour say: “no ““ we would cut the discounts because that kind of property ownership is theft from society“““|

“|and oh yes, they all say it from the comfort of the home they bought years ago.

This isn't the party of working people“|

“|it's the same old party of hypocrisy“|

“|the party of two faces“|

“|the party of two Jags“|

“|and now ““ yes ““ the party of two kitchens.

So we have got to let the message ring out“|

“|the real party of aspiration, of working people, the party that is with you, not against you is not that bunch of hypocritical, holier-than-thou, hopeless, sneering socialists“|

“|it's the Party that says: keep more of your money, buy your own home, choose your child's school, lead your own life“|

“|the Conservative party right here in this hall.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Tell it to young people: if you want your first job, your first pay-cheque, your first business, your first home ““ we're with you.

You want the proof of that?

It's not in the easy things you do, but in the difficult choices you make.

There was the choice we made to reform student finance.

Yes ““ it was incredibly hard.

But look what it means:

We've got some of the best-funded universities in Europe ““ and places for everyone who wants one.

There's the choice we're making to cap welfare at £23,000.

Again ““ hugely difficult.

But this is about a new deal ““ about funding 3 million more apprenticeships“|

“|so we say to school leavers “finishing your exams and heading straight on to welfare ““ that option is over“|

“|but the chance to get a trade and get on in life ““ that door is wide open.“|

Then there was the choice about changing the rules on house building.

Again, not easy ““ but worth it.

Because it means we can build 200,000 Starter Homes“|

“|homes at discounted rates, for under-40s, for first time buyers ““ homes with your name on them.

And of course there was the choice on Start Up Loans.

Now that wasn't just tough ““ it was a gamble“|

“|rapidly lending up to £25,000 to get businesses off the ground ““ people who couldn't get that money anywhere else.

But I said if I'm going to take a punt on anything, let's take a punt on the ingenuity and the talent of Britain's young people.

And they have come up with the goods.

I had a whole bunch of them in Number 10 last week ““ some turning over hundreds of thousands a year, one employing 15 people already“|

“|but all of them ““ all of them ““ glowing with pride that they were making it on their own.

This is what we're about: the first job, the first home, the first business.

And be in no doubt: all this is at risk with Labour.

You want to judge their promises for the next five years?

Let's start with their predictions from the last five years.

Labour said university admissions would collapse ““ they're at record highs.

They said unemployment would go up ““ it's gone down.

They said we'd lose a million jobs ““ we've got 1.9 million more jobs.

They said youth unemployment would rocket ““ it's at its lowest level since the 70s“|

“|those were the days when Labour were in hock to the Unions and the Lib Dems didn't even exist“|

“|so not much different to today then.

But if that's what they said to you in Opposition ““ why on earth would you trust them in Government?

And there's the biggest thing they fail to talk about.

Yes ““ the deficit.

They deny it, they forget it ““ but there's no way around it.

For young people, this isn't just a series of figures on a page“|

“|it's part of the bill that's being racked up in your name“|

“and they want you to pay it off for the rest of your lives ““ because they don’t have the guts to clear up their own mess.

Well, let us in this hall tell young people:

With the Conservatives: the deficit will come down, we will run a surplus, we’ll get back in the black“|

“|because unlike Labour, we’ll back you, we’ll build something better for you, we are with you.

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FAMILIES

And let’s say it to families too: “we are with you“^[2].

I am a father and a husband ““ and nothing is more precious to me than my family.

It doesn’t matter if you’re a Prime Minister, a driver, a shop-worker, a doctor, a teacher ““ nothing matters more than knowing your children are safe and happy.

And underlying all that is security. Financial security.

And we are with you.

When you’re juggling the family budget, we’re with you“|

“|freezing your council tax, keeping mortgage rates the lowest on record.

We’re with you at the petrol pump ““ taking £10 off a tank every time you fill up.

And we’re with you at the end of every month, when you open your payslip and find less taken away in tax.

When we came to office, the personal tax allowance stood at £6,475.

Next week, it reaches £10,600.

That means that on average, people are paying over £800 less in tax than when we took office.

And here’s our commitment: by 2020, the tax threshold will be £12,500.

Yes, with us ““ if you work 30 hours a week on Minimum Wage, you will pay no income tax at all.

That should mean four million more out of income tax altogether“}

“}a tax cut for thirty million“}

“}so let’s say it: our party, the Conservative Party, the party of the hardworking low paid once more.

And we’ll do something else.

The 40p tax rate was only ever supposed to be paid by the richest in society.

But today, too many hardworking, hard-pressed families have been dragged into paying it“}

“}primary school head-teachers, Detective Chief Inspectors.

So we’re going to increase the level at which the 40p rate kicks in, to £50,000.

Because we know this.

Tax cuts are the best way to increase living standards“}

“}and the best way to destroy living standards is to elect a Labour government.

If Ed Miliband gets in, the borrowing goes up, the confidence in our economy falls down ““ and your mortgage rates go up.

You know what a one per cent rise in interest rates would mean for the average mortgage?

An extra thousand pounds a year.

And then there’s their tax bombshell.

Every single family in Britain needs to pay attention to this.

Here’s what Labour have told you.

They’ve told you they are committed, like us, to making savings of £30 billion over the next two years.

They’ve told you that half of that will come from tax rises.

But what they refuse to tell you is where those tax rises will come from.

Income tax? Fuel duty? Beer duty? Or will it be the jobs tax again? The tax they always raise?

A.K.A the unemployment tax. The “here’s your P45“} tax. The misery tax.

Jobs lost. Businesses bankrupt. Families in turmoil“}

“}they talk about a cost of living crisis ““ it would be a cost of Labour crisis“}

“}and for the sake of Britain’s families, we cannot let that happen.

PENSIONERS

And let's say it to pensioners too: "we are with you"².

You know, some people say this Government has done too much for the older generation"

"that somehow it isn't fair to younger people.

But have you ever met a young person who doesn't care about how their parents or grandparents are going to be looked after?

Me neither. Because this comes back to some simple values.

We are talking about the ones who raised us, built homes for us, won wars for us, made sacrifices for us.

This is a generation that stands for one word above any other: duty"

"and we must always do our duty by them.

That's why five years ago I made a clear promise to Britain's pensioners.

We'd keep their free benefits: their winter fuel payment, bus passes, TV licences"

"we kept that promise "" and we would do the same all over again.

Five years ago we made a commitment to get the State Pension rising"

"it's up by £850 so far"

"and we'd see it rise further each year "" by earnings, inflation or 2.5 per cent; whichever is highest.

And what's more: the Pension Credit is changing, so that in future, every pound you've saved is really worth saving.

The compulsory annuities are going, so every pound you've saved is yours to spend how you like.

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The tax on your pension pot is going, so you can pass it to your loved ones tax free.

This is a record to shout from the roof-tops: not paltry 75p rises in the pension and raids on private saving"

“but backing those who’ve worked hard and done the right thing all their lives ““ real Conservative values in action.

NHS

And saying to the pensioners of this country “we are with you“ means an NHS that is always there for them.

Let me say something very clearly to everyone in this hall.

When it comes to the NHS, don’t whisper it, don’t hold back ““ speak loud and proud about what we have done.

Tell them on the door-step.

Tell them we protected the budget, so the spending has gone up year after year“

“and while you’re at it ““ tell them there’s only one group of politicians in the UK that have cut the NHS and it’s Labour in Wales.

Tell them we’ve got more doctors and nurses working in our NHS.

Tell them the Cancer Drugs Fund has got life-saving drugs to over 60,000 people ““ and remind them it didn’t even exist before this Government.

Tell them the survival rates for stroke, cancer and heart disease are all up“

“tell them hospital infections are cut in half“

“and tell them what all this means: more people hearing those magical words “all clear“, more precious loved ones getting better.

And from today, you can tell them something else.

For years it’s been too hard to access the NHS out of hours.

But illness doesn’t respect working hours.

Heart attacks, major accidents, babies ““ these things don’t just come from 9-5.

And the truth is that you are actually more likely to die if you turn up at the hospital at the weekend.

Some of the resources, like scanners, are not up and running. The key decision-makers aren’t always there.

So I can tell you this.

With a future Conservative Government, we would have a truly 7 day NHS.

Already millions more people can see a GP 7 days a week, but by 2020 I want this for everyone“

“ with hospitals properly staffed, especially for urgent and emergency care “

“ so that everyone will have access to the NHS services they need 7 days a week by 2020“

“the first country in the world to make this happen.

So whether you're a patient, a school leaver, a homebuyer, a parent, a pensioner "" we can say it: "we are with you."?

TIMETABLE FOR ACTION VERSUS TIMETABLE OF DESTRUCTION

And here's the proof: our timetable for action.

This isn't some vague to do list "" it's a will do list!

"and this is what you will get from us in the next Parliament:

Not a budget deficit "" a budget surplus.

No tax on the first £12,500 you earn.

No 40p rate until you earn £50,000.

500 new Free Schools.

200,000 Starter Homes.

3 million apprenticeships.

That in-out referendum on Europe.

The NHS protected "" and open 7 days.

That's what the Conservatives have "" a timetable for action.

And you know what? Labour have the exact opposite: a timetable for destruction.

All our patient, painstaking work of the last 5 years "" they could undo in just 5 months.

Free Schools can be closed in just one term.

Tax cuts can be reversed in a Budget.

Interest rates held down for so long can climb again overnight.

Jobs that have come back to our shores can leave our shores.

Investors can be spooked by turning on the TV!

"and believe me "" if they see Miliband walk down Downing Street they will take their business and jobs elsewhere.

Look "" we chose a Labour wrecking ball on our campaign posters for a reason:

Because they could do untold damage in one fell swoop.

CONCLUSION

So the choice on May 7th couldn't be more clear.

Between the competence that has got us this far ““ or the chaos of the alternative.

And I would say to everyone: when you´re standing in the polling booth“|

“|when you make that mark with your pencil, you are writing our future in indelible ink.

The future of your family; the future of Britain.

Look how far we´ve already come.

5 years ago the experts were questioning our plan.

Today, they´re hailing our “textbook recovery“[?].

5 years ago Britain was stooping low, weighed down by debt, decline and doubts that we would ever be great again.

Today, we´re standing tall“|

“|with manufactures that left our shores back where they belong“|

“|mills that were left abandoned alive with new industries“|

“|ideas that were scribbles on an envelope setting the stock market alight.

And friends ““ if you look at what we´ve done in 5 years, just think what we could do in 5 more.

The sunlit uplands were a slogan back then“|

“|today they´re in sight.

So let´s say it to the people of this country“|

“|we are with you ““ so come with us“|

“|let´s see it through“|

“|let´s finish the job“|

“|let´s build a better future for you, your family, for the country we all love.

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