

Jeremy Corbyn speech at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham

***Check
against delivery***

Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party,
speaking at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham, said:

Over the last week the dividing lines in
this election have got much clearer and sharper.

The two parties have published their
manifestos. Set out their visions.

And in the case of Labour – but only
Labour – published our sums too.

We don't just have a vision, we have
costed it too.

By contrast, the Tories are offering
blank cheques made out to misery.

But the contrast is more substantial
than that. I believe that the difference is this:

Where the Tories look to divide, Labour
seeks to bring people together.

The Tory manifesto must be the most
divisive for many elections past.

They are now pitching young against
old.

Their manifesto is a typical nasty party
attempt to set generations against each other.

For pensioners they offer a triple
whammy of misery:

Ending the 'triple lock' which protects
pensioner incomes, means-testing the Winter Fuel Allowance and slapping a
'compassion tax' on those who need social care by making them pay for it
using
their homes.

Some claim that cutting support for the elderly is necessary to give more help to the young. But young people are being offered no hope by the Tories either – loaded up with tuition fee debts, with next to no chance of a home of their own or a stable, secure job.

Labour stands for unity across all ages and regions in our country. It is simply wrong to claim that young people can only be given a fair deal at the expense of the old, or vice versa. We all depend on each other.

That is why we are calling on the Tories to drop their anti-pensioner package immediately – older people should not be used as a political football.

And we promise that a Labour government will make education free at all levels and build the homes young families need, offering the security of a home for life.

Only Labour stands for the many against government by, of and for the few.

We say that if we all stand together we can build a fairer Britain.

There is no trade-off between young and old – and there should be no trade-off.

Society should not be setting the future of our young against security for the old.

We have the wealth to offer a decent, secure life for all.

Labour's proposals will ask the top 5 per cent of earners and the big corporations to pay a bit more, to help address these problems.

That way we can make sure that young people can get homes and pensioners can heat their houses in winter.

That way students can leave college without a huge burden of debt and older people can have their income protected through the "triple lock" which only Labour will guarantee.

I believe that this message is getting through.

The ink wasn't dry on the Tory manifesto

before some of their own MPs and candidates were inching away from the attack on the elderly.

They know it's not right and it's not fair.

They may even suspect it's not much of a vote-winner.

So Theresa, please end the anxiety for millions of older people and do a U-turn now. You will end up facing the right way.

Let me now say a word about young people.

And it is right that I do so in the youngest city in Britain, where forty per cent of the population is under 25.

But also a city where nearly ten per cent of young people are out of work, more than twice the national average.

In a region where poverty is increasing. Here in the West Midlands one child in three is living in poverty.

Sure Start was one of the best achievements of the last Labour government. We must build on that, instead of cutting back on school meals. A free school meal, without stigma, is the right of every child.

To make things still more difficult for the young, here in the West Midlands house prices have risen by five per cent over the last year, while wages are still lower than they were in 2008.

It all adds up to the worst thing for young people – loss of hope.

Hope for a decent, secure job.

Hope that you will be able to get a home of your own.

Hope that you can enjoy an education without fear of crippling debt.

We speak, rightly, of left-behind communities. There are many, alas, in the West Midlands.

But there is also the danger of creating a left-behind generation, enjoying few of the chances and none of the advantages of their parents.

As I said when launching our manifesto on Tuesday, Labour's approach is based on hope.

And that is our offer to young people.

Labour will scrap tuition fees and lift the shadow of debt from students. The Tories won't.

Labour will invest in jobs, skills and training across all regions, including here in our traditional industrial heartland. The Tories won't.

Labour will build more than one million new homes over five years, with more than half being social housing for rent. The Tories won't.

This is the sort of policy our young people have a right to expect from politicians.

After all, in offering the next generation free education and the chance of a job and a home we are only offering what should be regarded as basic human rights.

In return, we have the right to ask just one thing of young people today.

Register to vote.

This weekend is your last chance to register – the last chance to make sure you can vote Labour on June 8.

Let me be clear to all young people:

I want you to vote Labour.

But above all I want you to vote.

It is a right the working people of this country fought for.

It is a right that some in the establishment would diminish or take away.

So let's dispel once and for all the myth that young people are apathetic about society by everyone getting on the electoral register and then getting down to the polling station on June 8.

I know that young people did not leave politics – politics left them. Now we are bringing politics back to the rising generation.

Young, old or somewhere in between, we are all in the same country, the same communities.

Labour knows that we sink or swim together.

When the Tories offer tax cuts to their rich friends, we say let's make life livable for the many first.

When the Tories want to balance the books on the backs of the vulnerable, we say let's tell the wealthy and big corporations to start paying the tax they owe.

Simple choices. But ones that make a difference to millions of people.

And there is a simple choice before the country in this election:

The Labour way of working for the good of the entire community, or the Tory way which is perpetuating the grotesque level of inequality that already exists in our society.

I know which one I've chosen – the Labour way, for the many not the few.

Ends.

[Andrew Gwynne response to Ruth Davidson's comments on the removal of the Winter Fuel Allowance](#)

Andrew Gwynne, Labour's National Elections Coordinator, responding to Ruth Davidson's criticism of Tory plans to remove the Winter Fuel Allowance from some pensioners, said:

"When the Scottish Tory Leader comes out against her own Party's attack on pensioner incomes I think it's fair to say the policy is starting to unravel.

"The Tory attack on pensioners' Winter Fuel Allowance is unfair and outrageous, and lays bare the threat they pose to pensioners' security and living standards.

"The Tories should admit they've got it wrong, apologise and drop it immediately."

Ends

Notes to editors

"We've made a different choice in Scotland in our Scottish manifesto today. We believe there shouldn't be means testing for the winter fuel payment."
Ruth Davidson, Leader of the Scottish Conservatives, Sky News, 19 May 2017

[The Tory threat to living standards – Labour demands Tories drop plans to remove Winter Fuel Allowances from pensioners](#)

Labour

has today demanded that the Tories immediately abandon plans to remove the Winter Fuel Allowances from pensioners.

Speaking

at a press conference this morning, John McDonnell, Labour's Shadow Chancellor,

said: "This is a savage attack on vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who are just about managing. We will not stand by and allow so many of them to be back in a situation where they have to choose whether they heat or eat."

This

comes as Labour today warns that the Tory manifesto represents a threat to living standards and increased insecurity for pensioners and working people.

Commenting

on the "extraordinary" lack of any mention of living standards in the Tories' manifesto, McDonnell said: "Living standards are falling under the Tories, yet

Theresa May couldn't promise that she would seek to address this. There is a clear and unambiguous threat to living standards; an attack on pensioners and on working people."

Rebecca

Long-Bailey, Labour's Shadow Business Secretary, outlined the threat the Tories pose to pensioners, including:

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The

Tories' new 'Double Lock', which would have left pensioners at least £330 worse off had it been in place in recent years.

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How
five in every six pensioners are set to lose Winter Fuel payments, worth up to
to
£300.

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That
34 million people face the prospect of working longer if Theresa May raises
the
State Pension age.

And
it is a similar tale for working people:

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Since
2010, the average household is paying more in both direct and indirect
taxation: nearly £2,000, with the threat of further tax rises

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Under
the Tories the UK is set to experience the worst decade for real household
disposable incomes since 1949.

Alongside
the press conference, Labour has published a new document titled: 'The Tory
Threat To Living Standards'. This analysis reveals the scope of the Tory
attack
on living standards, setting out how working people and pensioners will pay
the
price of the Tories' betrayal.

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

**John
McDonnell, Labour's Shadow Chancellor**, speaking at a press conference
outlining the Tory threat to working people, said:

**On
the Tory manifesto:**

"This
was a manifesto that offers working people and pensioners' insecurity with a
huge question mark over their living standards.

"Gone
was the commitment to raise working people's living standards. Gone was the
commitment not to raise taxes on working people. And gone was the commitment
to
protect pensioners' incomes through the triple lock.

“This signals a clear threat to working people and to pensioners. So that’s the choice at this election; a threat to working people’s and pensioners’ living standards if the Tories are re-elected on the 8th of June, or a Labour plan to support working people. A Labour plan that will introduce a Real Living Wage of £10 an hour by 2020. A Labour plan that will commit to no income tax, VAT or NICs rises for 95 per cent of tax payers. And a Labour plan that will invest in our vital public services.

“That’s the choice at this election. A clear threat to working people’s living standards or a Labour Party that will stand up for the many, and not the few.

On wages:

“We are currently witnessing the worst decade for pay in 200 years.

“Real wages are still lower today than they were when the Tories came to power in 2010.

“According to the OECD, the UK is the only advanced major economy where growth has returned since the crash but wages have fallen.

“And it is unlikely to stop there. Experts have warned that with the cost of living increasing, household incomes are set to be squeezed even further.”

On taxation:

“Under the Tories working families are paying more in tax and there are further tax rises in the pipeline.

“Since 2010, the average household is paying more in both direct and indirect taxation- a total of nearly £2,000.

“Labour is promising no increase in taxation on low and middle income earners. The Tories in contrast have form on tax rises.

“They have increased taxes on working people before and they will do it again.”

Rebecca Long-Bailey, Labour’s Shadow Business Secretary, said:

On

pensioners:

“The

Tories have launched an all-out attack on pensioner incomes, by abandoning the Triple Lock, cutting Winter Fuel Payments, raising the State Pension age, and breaking promises on social care and GP access.

“They’ve laid bare the threat they pose to pensioners’ security and living standards. They have shown beyond doubt they’re turning their backs on older people and to future generations of pensioners.

“Theresa May’s message to millions of workers is now this: work for years longer only to receive far less generous support in old age.

Notes to editors:

- Link to ‘The Tory threat to living standards’ document: http://www.labour.org.uk/page/-/party-documents/9684_17%20Tory%20threat%20to%20Living%20Standards.pdf

The Conservatives three-pronged attack on pensioners

The Conservative Party manifesto launched an all-out attack on pensioner incomes, with three major new burdens placed on older people:

1. Scrapping the ‘triple lock’ on state pensions so that pensioner incomes are no longer protected from a Tory hard Brexit.
2. Means testing Winter Fuel Payments to remove support to heat the homes of 10 million pensioners
3. Forcing those who need social care to pay for it using their homes

Labour will stand up for older people by maintaining the triple-lock on state pensions, protect winter fuel payments and free bus passes and spend an additional £8 billion over the Parliament on addressing the Tories’ social care crisis, while also laying the foundations for a new National Care Service.

Commenting on the pensioner penalties being promised by the Conservatives, **Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party**, said:

“Theresa May’s nasty party has launched a shameful attack on older people – introducing a compassion tax to force those in need of social care to pay for it with their family home. Labour is standing up for pensioners and

guaranteeing the triple-lock on state pensions, as well as giving social care the funding it needs.

“It is clear the Conservatives are offering more of the same, tax giveaways for their billionaire friends and nothing for ordinary people. Labour is standing up for the many, not the few.”

Debbie Abrahams, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary said:

“The Conservative Party is completely abandoning older people by scrapping the pensions ‘triple lock’, removing the Winter Fuel Allowance from 10 million pensioners, making 34 million people work longer and forcing those who need care to pay for pay for it with their family home.

“This is the direct result of seven years of Tory economic failure. Labour completely oppose this shocking attack on a whole generation.

“We will deliver a secure and dignified retirement for the many, not just the few wealthy enough to manage under these Tory attacks.”

Ends

Notes to editors

According to the Resolution Foundation, the Conservative manifesto commitment to means test the Winter Fuel Payment will remove entitlement from 10 million pensioners:

<http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/media/blog/death-taxes-the-conservative-manifesto-and-the-changing-politics-of-intergenerational-fairness/>

Tory Manifesto offers a blank cheque for Britain – John McDonnell

Now the

Tories have published their manifesto in full we can see how a party that has added £700 billion to the national debt since 2010 really approaches the public finances.

Today they

have produced an 84 page document in which they made 60 spending commitments but provide costings for only one, just a day after Philip Hammond revealed he had no idea how much High Speed 2 will cost.

This

contrasts with Labour’s fully-costed manifesto, published on Tuesday that identified funding covering all spending commitments.

**Commenting,
John McDonnell, the Shadow Chancellor, said:**

“The Tories’ numbers don’t add up. They have published an 84 page blank cheque that provides a tax giveaway guarantee for big business, while offering a roll of the dice for working families with no commitments to rule out rises in income tax and National Insurance.

“Now we can see why Theresa May is running scared of debating Jeremy Corbyn, when she publishes a document like this that contains more questions than answers. It also further shows how her party has managed to add £700 billion to the national debt since 2010, as they won’t be straight with the British people on how much their plans for a wealthy few truly cost.

“One of the few revenue raisers they identified was withdrawing free school meals from children and withdrawing support for pensioners struggling to heat their homes – this just sums up the Tory approach.

“This is the equivalent of the Prime Minister going to the shops with the nation’s cheque book and not checking the price of the goods as she puts them in the trolley.

“All we know if the Tories are returned next month is that if you’re a pensioner you face the penalty of losing your winter fuel payments, control of your home, and the value of your pension.

“Today has revealed that only the Labour Party at this election will stand up for pensioners, and the 95 percent of taxpayers to build an economy for the many not the few.”