

# Emily Thornberry speech to Labour Party Conference

**Emily**

**Thornberry MP, Shadow Foreign Secretary,** speaking at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton today, said:

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

Chair, Conference – It’s a pleasure to be back here in Brighton and Hove.

A city which we can say – once again – has no Tory MPs. And it’s a pleasure to be taking part in a debate where our delegates have such a strong voice,

And we should all thank Kate Osamor and Nia Griffith who have allowed me to speak on their behalf today so our delegates could have more time. And let me say as well – it’s an honour to be on this stage with our leader, my friend, this country’s next Prime Minister – Jeremy Corbyn.

You know, some people might remember a certain viral video from election night of a bit of high-fiving gone wrong. But that’s not how I’ll remember that evening. I’ll just remember seeing a friend of mine who had defied all the pundits, all the doubters

and all the expectations. Someone who had proved during the election, who has proved throughout his leadership, who has proved all his life, that nothing is stronger, nothing on earth than a person of principle.

And it is that strength and those principles, those unshakeable values that are going to take Jeremy into Downing Street and put Labour back into power. After all, it was on this very stage two years ago that Jeremy declared his mission:

“To put Labour values – the people’s values – back – into – politics.”

And he has achieved that. But thanks to Jeremy’s inspirational leadership, thanks to the brilliant efforts of everyone in this room, we can now set our sights even higher.

It is time to put Labour values, the people’s values back into Government.

Because if June’s election taught us one thing, it’s that if we stand behind Jeremy’s principled leadership, if we stand united as a Party, and

if we stand on a radical manifesto, there is absolutely no seat that we can't win. And no Tory that we can't bin.

So next time, we've got to take the fight into their backyard. Let's go round the coast to Hastings. And end the ambitions of Amber Rudd. Let's go to Chingford. And send Iain Duncan Smith to the Job Centre. Then let's go to Uxbridge. And make sure Boris Johnson never, ever gets into No.10.

But Conference, please let's just take a second to sympathise with poor old Boris. Oh come on, just a second. He's not been happy lately. Apparently he's sick of being blamed for the way Brexit is going and all the broken promises of the Leave campaign.

I'm sorry, Conference? I'm sorry? Who does he think made all those promises? Who does he think was in charge of the Leave Campaign?

I know Boris doesn't like paternity tests, but we might need one for Brexit. We need to get him in a studio with Jeremy Kyle.

"Yes, I'm sorry, Mr Johnson...

"We've got the results back...

"It looks like this one is yours...

"It must have been that wild night out you had with Michael Gove.

"I've calculated your maintenance payments...

"That'll be 350 million a week."

But Conference, what a contrast. Here on this stage, you've got Labour's Brexit team – myself, Keir and Barry working every day in harness with Jeremy, John and Diane. All pulling in the same direction. All focused on the same three priorities. The three priorities we've had since Day One after the Referendum – Jobs, Jobs and Jobs.

While next week in Manchester, we're going to see six Tory rats, fighting in a sack, not worried about protecting the jobs of the British people. Just every one of them looking out for their own.

Last Friday, Theresa May said we need to be "creative and imaginative" to get a good outcome from Brexit. Well I've got a creative idea for her step aside, end your shambles of a Government, and let the grown-ups on this stage take charge.

And talking of grown-ups I'm proud to be here representing our

great Shadow Foreign Office team: Liz McInnes; Fabian Hamilton; Khalid Mahmood;

Helen Goodman and Ray Collins. And I'm proud as well to be speaking on behalf of my friends, Kate Osamor and Nia Griffith. Kate, our Shadow Secretary of State For International Development, facing a world in now constant humanitarian crisis,

not least as a result of climate change.

As Kate would say, in that world, we've got a decision to make. Either tackle head on the root causes of these crises or spend more and more every year dealing with the consequences. And, under a Labour government. That is a decision we will not duck.

And Nia, our Shadow Defence Secretary, who has shown that Britain under Labour

will be a strong leader within NATO, committed to spend 2 per cent of our national income on defence. And committed to ensure that those who put their lives on the line for this country the real-terms pay rises and the decent living conditions that their service and their sacrifice deserves.

In dark, dangerous times for our world Britain must be equally strong and equally committed to defence, development and diplomacy. That is what we offer on this stage. And that is what Labour in government will guarantee.

But Conference, make no mistake. These are indeed dark and dangerous times for the world. And too many times, the problems we face come down to people abusing their power and ignoring the rules and values that should govern our world.

From Venezuela to The Philippines we see the rule of law ignored and originally democratic governments turning into increasingly autocratic regimes. From Myanmar to Yemen we see human rights ignored and flagrant attacks against ordinary civilians qll too often using British-made weapons.

From Kashmir to Israel and Palestine we see efforts at diplomacy ignored and actions taken on both sides which will make peace harder to achieve.

From Syria to Sudan, we see the Geneva Conventions ignored and despots committing war crimes with total freedom and impunity.

All across Europe we see the basic rules of humanity and the basic lessons of history ignored as cowardly terrorists stalk our city streets and vicious extremist parties rise in the polls.

And of course, in North Korea we see the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty ignored with all the terrifying consequences the world is now facing today.

Taken altogether what we are seeing today is the biggest challenge to the world order since the 1930s and the collapse of the League of Nations. And if you believe as I do in what Jeremy has called...“A world based on rules and laws” then this is the time, more than ever, when we need our leaders to stand up for that world order. To stand up for human rights and international treaties. And to insist on working through the United Nations for peace.

But instead, Conference we now have a President of the United States who believes that none of these rules and laws apply to him.

- Imposing a travel ban on Muslims;
- Equivocating over illegal settlements;
- Reneging on the Paris climate treaty;
- Imperilling the nuclear deal with Iran;
- And threatening to “totally destroy” North Korea. A country of 20 million men and women. And 5 million children.

This is not what we need from the leader of the free world.

To be honest, Conference it’s more like what we would expect from a rogue dictator. And what makes it even worse is to see this Tory government and this Tory Prime Minister pathetically going along with it all walking hand-in-hand with Trump at the White House, supine, sycophantic and spineless.

And why? All in the vain hope that Trump will ride to the rescue after Brexit with some fantasy free trade deal. Because, for this Tory government that’s what their foreign policy has come down to no values or ethics, no rules or principles just a simple case of what works best for the bottom line. How else do they explain why – last week – Theresa May was in New York, finally announcing the suspension of cooperation with the military in Myanmar because of their actions in Rakhine.

While on the very same day, Michael Fallon was in Jeddah, signing a deal to increase our cooperation with the military in Saudi Arabia wantonly ignoring their actions in Yemen. It is rank hypocrisy. But it also illustrates a basic fact that the world we want to see – a world governed by ethics and values, a world based on rules and laws will never truly exist as long as governments and world leaders get to decide for themselves when it suits them to play by the rules and when the rules can be safely ignored.

The world we want will never exist when governments like Theresa May’s think it’s perfectly OK to loudly condemn those they regard as enemies but then fall utterly silent when it is their friends in Bahrain rounding up,

torturing and executing civilian protestors or their friends in Saudi Arabia dropping cluster bombs on innocent children in Yemen.

In fact, if they were just silent that would be an improvement. Instead, we have to listen to Michael Fallon saying that the thousands of children killed and injured by air strikes in Yemen are just a consequence of Saudi Arabia "defending itself"...

..."Defending itself".

But Conference, it does not have to be this way. Labour can and will do things differently when we are back in power.

And there is one concrete step we can commit to today.

For too long successive governments in this country have taken decisions on granting arms export licences behind closed doors and shrouded in secrecy.

Just two months ago we had the ludicrous situation where the campaigners trying to stop arms sales to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen had their Judicial Review rejected on the basis of government evidence presented in closed court a secret court so they were not even allowed to hear the evidence let alone challenge it.

The fact is that arms export decisions made by Tory Ministers are entirely subjective assessments taken without proper Parliamentary scrutiny without listening to independent, expert advice, but listening far too much to lobbyists for the arms trade and repressive foreign regimes. A process that leads to nonsensical double-standards, where the Government can decide too late that selling arms to Myanmar is wrong but immediately increase its sales to Saudi. It is an arms control regime that was already outdated. but which the Tories have systematically abused, undermined and left fatally discredited.

And as the four shadow ministers responsible, Barry, Nia, Kate and I have agreed that it must change. So just as the new Labour Governments elected in 1997 and 2001 Immediately reformed the way decisions were made on monetary policy and competition policy, the next Labour Government will immediately reform the way decisions are made on the export of arms.

A wholesale reform of the legal and regulatory framework fully implementing the International Arms Trade Treaty with clear rules, tests and criteria for decision-making, based on independent, expert advice and the objective assessment of evidence. A new system, that will prevent the misuse or abuse of licences and adhere to the principles of transparency, true

Parliamentary accountability and freedom from undue influence.

Because Conference, it is not enough for us just to be better than the Tories, we must set an entirely new standard for Britain and a shining example to the world.

And if that sounds like setting our ambitions high, well you're damn right it is and we should not apologise for that.

You know, I heard Chuka say yesterday:

*"Overpromising and under-delivering..."*

*"...Is one of the reasons..."*

*"...there was such fury with the Blair government."*

And when it comes to foreign policy, I totally agree with that statement. But the way we avoid that mistake next time round isn't to water down the promises we make, it's to keep the promises we make and make sure we deliver them.

We will be a Government that will never put the interest of the rich and powerful above human Rights, The Rule of Law, and the lives of innocent children in Yemen...

A Government that will never put our principles up for auction.

And if we are going to be the kind of government we could be, we do not just need what Robin Cook called for, twenty years ago, when he set out his Mission Statement for the Foreign Office.

We do not just need an "ethical dimension" to our foreign policy, we need to go much further than that.

We need what Martin Luther King called for 50 years ago, when he set out his case against the Vietnam War.

– We need "a revolution of values".

– "A genuine revolution of values".

– "A radical revolution of values".

Because if our mission back when Jeremy was elected, was to put Labour values back into politics and our mission today is to put those values back into Government, then our mission for the years to come must be equally ambitious and equally radical. It must be to put Labour values at the heart of the world order, to be a beacon in every corner of the globe for the values

we  
believe in here at home.

We have the leader in Jeremy to do it. We have the team on this stage to do it. We have the members in this hall, and all across the country, who will hold us to it.

So let us make that our mission. And this time – this time – let us make it our record.

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## Keir Starmer speech to Labour Party Conference

**Keir Starmer MP, Shadow**

**Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union**, speaking at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton today, said:

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

Thank you conference. Thank you to everyone who has taken part this morning. Thank you also to Labour's fantastic Shadow Brexit team: Jenny Chapman; Paul Blomfield; Matt Pennycook; Dianne Hayter; Karin Smyth; Emma Hardy; and Jess Morden. ardBelieve you me, they could all have chosen easier jobs in the last year.

What a year it has been. Article 50 triggered. A snap election. It was meant to be a coronation, but it left us with a broken Government. Too weak to govern. Too divided to negotiate Brexit. Constructive ambiguity is now official government policy.

It would be funny, if it wasn't so tragic.

Britain's place in the world is at stake. People's jobs are at stake. People's mortgages are at stake. People's futures are at stake. And who are the authors of this Tory tragedy?

First,  
David Cameron, who gambled his country, because he couldn't hold his party together. Then, Boris Johnson, standing in front of his red bus, with a lie on

the side – a false promise of £350m a week for the NHS. Ruthless about his own ambitions, but reckless about our country.

Now

Theresa May, robotically marching towards an extreme Brexit – focussed on her own survival not the national interest.

Maybe the Tories can afford this disastrous approach to Brexit. Maybe the Tories would benefit from a Brexit of deregulation, where rights are put at risk.

But

you know, and I know, that millions of working people cannot. Whether you're in the front seat with Theresa May, or in the backseat with Boris Johnson, there's nothing patriotic about joy-riding our country's economy off a cliff.

This

has to stop. It's time for a different approach. So let me share with you Labour's approach. An approach that is both democratically legitimate and economically sensible. That respects the referendum result and puts jobs and the economy first. An approach rooted in our core values. Values that bind us together. Labour values.

Values of

internationalism: we have always been an internationalist party; reaching out to Europe and the rest of the world rather than turning inwards. Values of co-operation, solidarity, and a simple belief that we achieve more together than we do alone. An unflinching commitment to human rights, the rule of law, rights at work and the protection of our environment. Fairness, equality and social justice in our economy and in our society.

As we exit the EU, we should not abandon these values. On the contrary, these values should drive everything we do in these uncertain times. That is why, over the summer, Labour reached an agreed position that transitional arrangements on the same basic terms that we currently have with the EU are in the national interest. For Labour that means that during the transitional phase, we would remain in a customs union with the EU and within the Single Market.

The

Government on the other hand spent their summer squabbling in public. So dysfunctional had it all become, that the Prime Minister had to fly to Florence on Friday, only to accept Labour's position on transitional arrangements. Let's see if that survives contact with Tory party conference.

But

let's not be fooled by what the Prime Minister said in Florence. All she has done is to delay the cliff edge. All her ideological red-lines remain. She still prioritises arbitrary immigration targets over jobs and the economy.

She has no answer to fundamental questions in Northern Ireland. And she still insists – in spite of all the warnings – that no deal is a viable option.

The

Labour Party rejects that approach. If we were in Government, we would build a

new progressive partnership with the EU. We would negotiate a final deal that ensured continued co-operation and collaboration with our EU partners in all fields. And a final deal, that retained the benefits of the Customs Union and the Single Market. Options for achieving this should not be swept off the table.

Subject,

of course to negotiations, remaining in a form of customs union with the EU is

a possible end destination for Labour.

We

are also flexible as to whether the benefits of the Single Market are best retained by negotiating a new Single Market relationship or by working up from

a bespoke trade deal. No rash, ideological red lines preventing a sensible deal. No fantastical, 'blue sky' proposals.

A pragmatic approach. Labour are now the grown-ups in the room. We stand ready to take charge of the negotiations. Not acting for narrow political gain.

But in the national interest.

Conference,

the way the Tories are handling Brexit tells you a lot about their competence

–

or should I say incompetence. But it

also tells you about their character. About their dogmatic disregard of the national interest; about their sheer sense of entitlement; about their post-imperial delusions; about their willingness to put other people's jobs at

risk.

Our

country today is so much better than our Government. This is a country yearning

for change. Theresa

May – and whichever Brexiteer replaces her – cannot deliver that change. The old

politics and the Tory old guard have had their day.

We need a transformative Labour Government. Not just

to break the impasse in Brexit negotiations and to deliver a progressive new partnership with the EU – vital though that is.

But to

tackle the wider injustices and inequalities we see all around us. To give hope that our society, our public services and our economy don't have to be like this. That we can build a better, fairer and more inclusive Britain.

That's why I came into politics. That is why you are in this hall. It's why Jeremy has been able to mobilise 600,000 members ...and inspire the support of over 12 million people. It's why the clock is ticking for this Prime Minister and this Government.

We

have come a long way in the last year. Now is the time for us to lead. To bring

a divided country back together. To mend our broken politics. This is Labour's

opportunity. This is Labour's responsibility. And, working together, this can be Labour's achievement.

Delivering

a Government for the many, not the few.

Ends

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## [Glenis Willmott MEP speech to Labour Party Conference](#)

**Glenis**

**Willmott MEP, Leader of the European Parliamentary Labour Party**, speaking at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton today, said:

**\*\*\*CHECK**

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

Conference,

this is my final speech as Labour's Leader in the European Parliament. Next week

I will be retiring as an MEP. And while I must sadly, inevitably, talk about Brexit, perhaps you can indulge me for a minute in a little nostalgia.

Look

back with me to a simpler time. Before the Tories' EU referendum divided our country. When Britain was known around the world for its values of tolerance

and fairness at home and for its international leadership on the global stage.

It was a time when if Britain's negotiations went badly in Brussels, all we had to fear – if you believed the papers – was quieter hoovers and slightly straighter bananas.

It is not that long ago, but it feels like a different world to today. And while you can still find bendy bananas on the shelves of our supermarkets, a lot of changes did come through our membership of the EU, that have made Britain a better place.

Now, we might not have not solved all the problems facing our country. but I am proud of the work of Labour's MEPs who have, working through the EU, helped in the fight to overcome them:

.  
Better workers' rights, such as equal pay for part-time workers and guaranteed paid holiday;

.  
Investment in poorer parts of the country at a time when the Tory government was unashamed in its disregard for our industrial communities;

.  
Environmental standards making the products we buy safer and helping to clean up our beaches and the toxic air in our cities;

.  
Improved financial regulation, to tame the casino capitalism that led to the last global financial crisis.

Conference,  
I never claimed the EU was perfect, but as we now prepare to leave, we need to remember the victories we have won. Because let us be in no doubt: many of the politicians who are leading our country through the EU exit door want to leave

those rights and protections behind.

It is one of the things they always hated about the EU – their desire for a free-market free-for-all has been tempered by European values of social justice and equality, by a belief in government stepping in to help the most vulnerable.

And as our country enters its most important negotiations in my lifetime, there is a real danger that Britain will plummet out of the European Union with no deal in 18 months.

And no deal is not better than a bad deal: our country will become poorer; jobs will be lost; whole sectors of the economy will grind to a halt.

It is more than a year since the EU referendum. Six months since the triggering of Article 50. So it is a good moment to take stock of those Brexit promises.

Remember? International trade deals ready to go; British trade with Europe to be guaranteed. Nobody, be they EU citizens in Britain or Brits abroad need worry about their status.

Conference, the government is no nearer to moving forward on these issues than it was when Theresa May first entered Downing Street.

Now, the government will claim the problems lie with the EU. Theresa May has called on EU leaders to be creative and to show more imagination.

But our colleagues in Europe simply see a government stuck in a world of its own imagination: an expectation that we be released from the rules of European trade, but then just continue to trade like we used to; the idea of putting up a new customs border that both exists and doesn't exist at the same time.

Conference, it's not creative, it's science fiction. And I'll tell you something else that's science fiction: the outrageous claim that our NHS will get an extra £350 million a week because of Brexit. It isn't true. It was never true. Shame

on you Boris Johnson.

Conference,

I raise these examples because there is a danger that the prime minister leads the country into Brexit in the same failed way she led her party into the General Election.

Back

in May and June, Theresa May kept proclaiming herself to be a strong and stable leader, when all around her could plainly see she was anything but. She was the only person left believing her own propaganda. And once again her strategy is failing.

She

chose to start negotiations on a note of confrontation putting her party before the country. She tried to regain lost trust with her speech in Florence, yet all can see that her government policy is still just broad aspiration at best.

From

manufacturing to medicine, financial services to food processing, sector after sector of our economy is facing uncertainty. Investment decisions are delayed.

So

let's be clear: the government's fly-by-night negotiating strategy is a threat to jobs, it is a threat to tax revenues, and, in undermining the economy of our country, it is a threat to the future of our public services as well.

Conference,

I'm not going to stand up on this stage and tell you that I think Brexit is the answer to our country's problems. I don't. I put my heart and soul into campaigning in the referendum for Britain to stay in the European Union, to maintain our alliances, to protect our trade and the jobs that depend on it. It is what I think would have been best for the country. But, and it really does pain me to say this, we lost.

And

just like after any electoral defeat, we need to pick ourselves up, look at the challenges facing our country, and begin the next campaign.

So

now Labour MEPs are looking ahead to what will probably be their final vote: sometime in the next 18 months the European Parliament will have to decide whether to approve – or not – the final Brexit deal.

And  
on behalf of my Labour colleagues, and on behalf of our sister party  
colleagues  
across Europe, I can tell you:

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There  
will be no backing for a deal that undermines the peace process in Northern  
Ireland;

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There  
will be no backing for a deal that fails to give peace of mind to EU citizens  
in Britain and Brits who have made their home abroad;

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And  
there will be no backing for a deal that opens the door to attacks on  
workers'  
rights and safety standards.

So  
conference, as the Brexit talks continue, let's stand united in holding the  
Tories' feet to the fire. In challenging the heartlessness of the right-wing  
vision for Brexit Britain. And let's stand united as Labour campaigns as the  
true voice of our country.

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## [Ian Lavery MP speech to Labour Party Conference](#)

**Ian Lavery MP, Chair of the Labour Party**, speaking at the Labour  
Party Conference in Brighton today, said:

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

Conference, colleagues, brothers and sisters. We  
nearly did it! Who would have  
thought this time last year that we would be here, having been a hair's  
breadth  
away from having the keys to Downing Street?

The snap general election, that Mrs May said

wouldn't happen. saw us do something that political pundits said was impossible.

.  
Winning the support of nearly 13 million people – our best vote for 20 years.

.  
Achieving the biggest increase in Labour's share of the vote since 1945.

.  
Denying the Tories an overall majority.

.  
Turning the tide in Scotland and gaining six seats

.  
Achieving our best share of the vote in Wales for 20 years

.  
Achieving our highest share of the vote in England since 1966. And winning some seats we have never won, and only imagined winning in our wildest dreams.

Conference,  
we achieved something special with an unashamed message of hope

Just over a year ago Theresa May was swept to the leadership of the Tories and the country without being elected – even by Tory Party members. So emboldened was Mrs May, that the architect of Tory austerity, George Osborne, was kicked out of cabinet like a dog in the night.

What a contrast to now – denied a mandate by the great British public. So embattled is Mrs May that she is being led a merry dance by bungling Boris. And so chaotic is the Tory Party that its members believe the best choice to replace Mrs May is Jacob Rees-Mogg.

Can you imagine Jacob Rees-Mogg leading this country? It would be funny if it was not so serious. But the danger is the people of these countries will pay for the Tory chaos with their jobs, and we can't let it happen. And that's why it's so important that we build on the achievements of our election campaign.

And  
that's why we must continue to campaign – so when the next election is

called.

We are in pole position in the race to Downing Street. This is no pipe dream; this is political reality

In April, the Tories and most of the media expected Labour majorities to crumble and for the Party to be destroyed as an electoral force. On election night, Andrew Marr said “no one expected Corbyn to be such a good campaigner.” Really Andrew? No one? Where have you been? But Jeremy would be the first to say the campaign was not a one-person show.

What a great campaign Labour waged. From the members who went out knocking doors and handing out leaflets, to the staff and volunteers who came together as one team at Southside. From the trade unions who mobilised their members, to the teams in our offices in Wales and Scotland and every region. Everyone deserves to give themselves a pat on the back. And a special thanks to those who came along to our rallies, across the UK.

Who made politics exciting again and contributed to an atmosphere of change? The statistics speak for themselves. They're in the report. But I'll mention just a few.

Huge increases in our social media reach – for example, Labour's Facebook 'likes' increased 44% to nearly a million and Jeremy's rose 31% to 1.2 million. We came of age digitally in this election. A fantastic voter registration campaign that saw more than two million visit the electoral commission's voter registration site. Four million visitors to Labour's website. Eight million people watching our Party-political broadcast on the NHS on TV – that's two million more viewers than the Great British Bake off!

And none of this could have been done without cash to match the Tories. In just six weeks, our supporters gave nearly £5m in donations, averaging £19 – that's more than a quarter of a million donations. And that's on top of £4m donated by our trade union affiliates. It was a truly amazing campaign. Positive, hopeful, funded by the many.

And what a contrast with the Tories. Theirs was a campaign funded by a handful of super-rich donors. With a leader who was hiding from the voters. And a manifesto that failed even to give the electorate the courtesy of some costings. And, as the polls narrowed, the bankruptcy of the Tories was plain to see – all they could do was escalate their scurrilous

personal attacks – above all, on Jeremy, on John, and on Diane.

Diane – let's take a moment to consider what you had to put up with. According to Amnesty International, you were the target of 45% of all the twitter abuse directed at female MPs. The Tories have questions to answer – they deliberately targeted you and spent a fortune smearing you. But you responded with dignity and discipline and your own constituents in Hackney North and Stoke Newington rewarded you – with a thumping 35 thousand-plus majority.

Conference, the Labour Party has had a massive impact since the election. Two weeks after the election, on the back foot, the Tories' Queen's Speech made no mention of:

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Scrapping the winter fuel allowance for millions of pensioners.

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Of ditching the triple lock protecting the value of pensions.

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Of a dementia tax on social care.

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Of taking free meals away from younger primary school children.

.  
Of new grammar schools.

.  
Or of unbanning fox hunting.

If this is what we can achieve in opposition, imagine what we could achieve if we had the keys to Downing Street

We would start building a Britain for the many not the few, by:

- Introducing a £10 living wage by 2020.
- Banning zero hours contracts.
- Introducing free schools means for all primary school children.
- Scrapping tuition fees and reinstating maintenance awards.

- Giving the NHS the money it needs.
- Tackling the crisis in social care.
- Scrapping public sector pay cap.
- And putting trade union rights at the heart of our agenda.

Unlike the Tories, everything we promised in our manifesto was fully costed. And, unlike the Tories, we also had a plan for rebuilding the economy, a plan for investing in sustainable growth, for investing to create the wealth and decent jobs that would underpin a fairer society.

The Tories have been – and continue to – giving away tens of billions of pounds through cuts in corporation tax, capital gains tax and other tax breaks for big business and the very wealthy. They say it's to incentivise investment. But that hasn't happened. In every single year of the last seven years under the Tories, capital investment as a percentage of GDP has been lower than the average under the last Labour Government. So, the Tory tax breaks for the rich are not only unfair. They are also not working.

Conference, this is why we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. Denying the Tories a majority was a great achievement, but it's no substitute for winning power. 13 million people voted for a message of hope in June. Millions more can be won over to our cause.

It doesn't have to be like this, there is always an alternative. By stepping up our campaigning and mobilising our membership. We can take our message of hope to every city, every town and every village across this country. A united Party, living our own values of solidarity to transform society. It is high time we invested in people and began to instil hope and aspiration.

Conference, together we will build an economy that works for all, a country where no one is held back.

A society for the many, not the few

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# For the many, not the few – General Secretary Iain McNicol speech to Labour Party Conference

Iain McNicol, General Secretary of the Labour Party, speaking at Labour Party Conference, said:

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

Thank you, conference and it's great to be back in Brighton.

That's *Labour-run*, *Tory-free* Brighton & Hove.

Being back in Brighton reminds me of so many Labour movement conferences: TUC, the Labour Party, my union the GMB.

BUT there's someone on my mind this week.

Someone we're missing.

That's Mary Turner.

Mary was the very best of the Labour movement.

Passionate about social justice.

Driven by her values.

We miss her. *I miss her.*

We honour her memory.

Like Mary, I've always believed there is power in a union.

When I was an organiser for the GMB, I saw first-hand that without trade unions, the lives of working people can be hell.

Without trade unions:

no limits on working hours,

no rest breaks,

no paid holidays,

no safety on the building  
site or factory floor.

But there's something more.

Mary Turner knew it:

trade unionism can take you  
so far, but only Labour Governments can transform the lives of the many.

Our founders in 1900 knew it.

That's why they started the  
Labour Party in the first place.

To form governments and  
deliver policies.

The welfare state.

The United Nations.

Comprehensive schools.

The Open University.

A national minimum wage. Sure Starts for the children.

And the greatest achievement  
of any government:

the National Health Service.

So this week in Brighton let  
us focus on what the next Labour Government, led by Jeremy, will achieve.

How our generation will leave  
a lasting legacy like the generation of '45, or '64, and '97.

Let us start with the results  
of the last general election.

Despite losing the election,  
Labour outperformed expectations, and secured 41% of the vote, an increase of  
nearly 9 points since 2015.

And whilst we should not forget the six Labour seats we lost, we can be proud of the net gain of 30 seats, mostly from the Tories, in seats such as....

Battersea,

Bedford,

Plymouth,

Cardiff North,

and Portsmouth South.

We won in Canterbury, where Labour took the seat held continuously by the Tories and their like since 1295.

And Labour is back in Scotland.

Winning seven seats, with six gains from the SNP.

Isn't it marvellous to see so many more Labour women elected, the highest proportion of the Parliamentary Labour Party in our history?

More Labour MPs from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds,

More Labour MPs with disabilities,

More LGBT Labour MPs.

A Parliamentary Labour Party that looks like the UK: modern, diverse, grounded in reality.

This was an election where our online campaigning came into its own.

Labour had more than 1.2 million shares on Facebook.

We reached over 29 million unique Facebook users.

In the last two days of the campaign alone, 7.3 million individuals viewed our Get Out the Vote message on Snapchat.

We used professional,  
targeted, high-quality digital communications to support local campaigns, to  
register people to vote, to guide activists to key seats, and to get out the  
vote.

It was a brilliant campaign,  
and we should applaud all those involved.

Victory next time is in  
sight.

The campaign to win started  
within hours of the election result.

Over the summer, Jeremy  
completed his 50 Seat Tour, campaigning in

Bournemouth, Blackpool and  
Bolton

Crawley, Carlisle and  
Copeland

From Hastings to Harrow...

From Southampton to  
Southport...

Aberconwy to Arfon...

Glasgow,

Rutherglen,

The Western Isles,

Kirkcaldy,

Edinburgh and all points in  
between.

Thousands of members have  
been out on the doorsteps of Britain.

New members joining with  
veterans.

Young with old.

That's what I call real *progress*.

That's what I call real *momentum*.

A united party, on the road

to victory.

Let me turn to the Labour  
Party staff.

It is a daily privilege and  
honour to work with the dedicated and talented party staff.

They are the best in the  
business.

In the smoke and heat of an  
election campaign, there is no-one better to have on your side.

In every one of the speeches  
I've delivered as General Secretary, I have talked about the vital role of  
party members.

Not just cogs in an election  
machine, but as year-round advocates, developing policy, changing  
communities.

This conference thanks you,  
for everything you do.

Today, I am proud to announce  
we have 570,000 members, making the British Labour Party the largest  
political  
party in Europe.

We're picking up council  
seats in places such as...

North Somerset,

Thanet,

Suffolk...

and Airdrie.

In Worthing, up the coast  
from here, our candidate Becky Cooper won a council seat for Labour for the  
first time in 30 years.

And next year we have local  
elections across England, with millions going to the polls.

We are working hard to get  
our parliamentary candidates in the places we need to win.

We will continue the work of

the Jo Cox Women In Leadership Programme, which has already seen two of its alumni elected to Parliament.

And while I am happy to debate it,

I will not give an inch,

nor make an apology,

for using All-Women

Shortlists to get even-more Labour women into Parliament.

In every one of my reports to this conference, I've talked about the steady improvement in the party's finances.

It has taken a decade of hard work, but we are today mortgage-free, debt-free, loan-free.

So this is today's Labour.

Growing in size and confidence.

Financially secure.

Reaching into the Tory heartlands.

In contention to be the next Government.

Labour has the leadership in Jeremy, and the manifesto, the country is crying out for, on

education,

on health,

on social care,

on crime,

on transport,

on the environment,

on housing, and especially

on Brexit.

And on Europe, let me say how much we value the work of our colleagues in the European Parliament, and the leadership of Glenis Willmott.

Glenis: thank you for your service to our movement, party and country.

The Tories may be in office, but they have no mandate,

no majority,

no unity,

no authority.

But that doesn't stop them.

They think they're born to rule.

So who is going to stop them?

Not the Lib Dems.

Not UKIP.

Not the SNP.

And definitely not the DUP.

Who is going to stop them?

We are.

Since the election, thanks to the surge in our support, we have prevented the Tories from...

legalising fox hunting...

building more grammar schools...

Scrapping free school meals...

Ending the winter fuel payment...

And imposing a Dementia Tax.

Labour has dumped the Tory election manifesto in the shredder, and left Theresa May with nothing to say.

I said at the start how much  
I value the trade unions, and value the advances we have made for British  
workers.

But imagine if all of these  
hard-won gains are flushed down the drain in a Tory Brexit.

Imagine the Britain our  
children and grandchildren would inherit.

Only Labour can deliver a  
Brexit which looks after the many.

Finally, conference I hope  
you enjoy your time in Brighton & Hove.

A shining, diverse, European  
city, everything the Tories hate.

I propose only one  
improvement.

It's a small thing.

It's not much to ask.

Let's make the trains safer,  
more secure, more reliable

and run on time;

Let's nationalise Southern  
Rail!

Enjoy conference, and thank  
you.

Ends

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