

Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer
speaking at the Conservative conference, Monday 30th September

Thank you for that welcome... And can I welcome my mum? You saw her in that video, and she is here with us today for her first conference.

Twenty years ago, Mum thought it was a big deal when she watched the first Asians move into Coronation Street here in Manchester.

Well, now she's watched as the first Asians move into Downing Street.

Once again, we're living above the shop - and I'm so happy to make her proud.

It might be my mum's first Tory conference, but I've now been coming for thirty years.

Every year, we talk about what is at stake for our country. But never in my lifetime has there been a political moment like this. We will be remembered for how we respond. And we will do our duty responsibly, firmly, and democratically.

That starts with getting Brexit done.

We are leaving the European Union.

It's not a matter of if - it's a matter of days. 31 days - deal, or no deal.

We understand that preparing to leave without a deal is not only the responsible thing to do, but also the best way of leaving with a deal.

In all my years negotiating multibillion pound international deals, I never once walked into a room without being able to walk away.

That's why on my first day as Chancellor, I gave a speech to the Treasury about making No Deal preparations my top priority.

A few days later I doubled funding for it, taking our Brexit spending to a total of £4 billion this year.

And to give organisations and Devolved Administrations extra certainty for the year ahead, in the event of No Deal, I have now agreed to guarantee all £4.3 billion of EU-directed funding that they would have been expecting.

That doesn't mean that a No Deal would be without significant challenges. I know that some businesses and households are concerned about what a No Deal outcome might mean for them. I recognise that.

And I understand that the uncertainty around Brexit is challenging.

But our step-change in preparations has made a Deal outcome more likely, and a No Deal outcome more manageable.

Every department now has the resources available to prepare for No Deal. That means more Border Force staff, better transport infrastructure at our ports, more support for business readiness.

I've tasked the Treasury with preparing a comprehensive economic response to support the economy. Working closely with the Bank of England, we're ready to draw on the full armoury of economic policy if needed.

And the Bank has already revised its assessments because of the actions we've taken. Deal or No Deal: We will be ready.

All that is important - but Brexit is not just something to manage or mitigate. We understand this is ultimately a question of trust in democracy. A strong economy can only be built on the foundation of a successful democracy. And by definition, democracy isn't just for when it suits you.

Like the Lib Dems - who called for a referendum for years. Then sort of changed their mind. Then said they'd respect the result. Then sort of didn't. Then called for a second vote. Then changed their mind again, and now want to somehow pretend the whole thing never happened.

Going back on our promises to the British people isn't "liberal". And it certainly isn't democratic.

And then there's the Labour Party. They're so split down the middle, that even their leader and their Shadow Chancellor don't agree on whether they support Brexit.

So they'll hold another referendum with two options: perhaps, and maybe.

What a leader.

A man for the many Brexit positions, not the few.

What they don't seem to understand is that millions of people voted in good faith over three years ago. The biggest democratic exercise in our country's history. And they always forget one group of those voters: the millions who voted not to leave the EU, but now completely respect the result and want us to get Brexit done.

Yes, there are splits of opinion, and strong views on all sides. I passionately believe that we need to heal the divisions in our society. But the way to do that isn't to carry on arguing about Brexit forever and ever. It is to finally deliver on the original decision, and move the whole country forward.

People talk a lot about the risks of Brexit. Some understandable, some not. But the truth is this - and it isn't acknowledged as often as it should be - the most reckless course of all would be to not deliver Brexit at all.

If we fail to deliver on the instruction of the British people, we are in danger of tearing the very fabric of our democracy. A fabric that has been carefully woven together over centuries. And if we do that, I fear we may not be able to stitch it up again.

If people are going to have faith in the ballot box, we absolutely have to follow through on that vote.

No more second-guessing. No best of three. One vote. One mandate. One nation, moving forwards together.

As we get Brexit done and leave the EU, it's the right time to ask ourselves some big questions: Who are we as a country? How do we see ourselves in the years ahead? How will we shape our economy for the future?

Last week we saw Labour's answers to those questions. Jeremy Corbyn sees this as an opportunity to bring in nationalisation, protectionism and state control.

Let's be in no doubt about the biggest threat to the UK economy. Whenever I speak to businesses and international investors, the number one concern they always raise is not the form of our exit from the EU.

The real "project" to be fearful about is the agenda of the Labour Party. If they had their way, whole sectors of the economy would be renationalised. People's taxes would rise to the crippling levels of the past. People's jobs would be put at risk with sectoral pay bargaining. The return of trade union militancy would once again hold the government to ransom, wasting hundreds of billions of pounds, and hitting families and businesses around the country.

The British Chambers of Commerce said last week that Labour's plans will: "send an icy chill up the spines of business-owners and investors". And it's no wonder. We have a Shadow Chancellor who says businesses are "the real enemy", and openly admits he wants to overthrow capitalism.

Given how much damage they'd do every single day they're in office, I'm glad they say they would only be working four days a week.

You know, when I arrived at the Treasury, I did have a letter on my desk waiting for me, but it didn't say there was no money left. That's because we took the difficult decisions needed to get the deficit down by four-fifths.

We have now taken back control of our financial destiny, just as we take back control of our laws and borders.

It's easy to forget how bad things were when we first came in.

Labour lost control of our public finances - as they always do. And this was when they still believed in the basics of capitalism.

Our country borrowed £150 billion in their last year in office, the highest level in our peacetime history. And it fell to the Conservatives once again to wipe up Labour's mess.

And I'd like to pay tribute to both my immediate predecessors for their role in that.

We may disagree on our approach on Brexit, but as Conservatives we can be very proud of what they helped us to achieve. Labour left behind a bankrupt Britain - and we've fixed it.

They don't like to hear it. But when the opposition stop hiding from that election, I promise you, it won't be like last time. We won't shy away from talking about our hard-earned record on the economy.

And we won't shy away from telling everyone about the threat their divisive backwards bankrupt immoral, incompetent, ideological experiments will pose to everyone's way of life.

They try to claim the only alternative is a race to the bottom. Letting everyone fend for themselves. That's not our conservatism. I'm not sure it's anyone's.

We are forging ahead with our positive, One Nation vision for our country's future.

We believe in levelling up, skilling-up, and opening up. Embracing talent from around the world. And as we look towards a future outside the EU, I'm very optimistic we can build on our extraordinary economic strengths and reshape the British economy to seize the opportunities that this new chapter has to offer.

We'll be able to pursue a genuinely independent trade policy. We'll be able to replace inefficient EU programmes with better, home-grown alternatives. And from retail to green tech, we'll have the opportunity to design smarter, more flexible regulation.

To help us do that, I will launch a Brexit Red Tape Challenge to help identify EU regulations that we can improve or remove. Liberating our entrepreneurs, small businesses and consumers from the burden of over-bearing bureaucracy, wherever we see it. Doing what a good pro-business government does.

After the decade of recovery from the last Labour government we are now bringing in a decade of renewal.

With this government's new leadership, we have the opportunity to hit fast-forward on that renewal. It is an opportunity the Prime Minister and I are seizing.

We are not just neighbours, or even sometimes dog-sitters. We are partners. We share the same determination on Brexit, the same vision of One Nation conservatism and we both spend the same amount of time brushing our hair. Our vision is based on the people's priorities, and on Conservative principles.

Conservatives understand that a dynamic free market is the only way to fund world-class public services. For me, like so many others around the country, public services were my lifelines.

The teachers who made my career possible. The police officers who kept us safe when the street I grew up on became a centre for drug dealers. The NHS that cared for my dad in his final days.

These aren't just numbers on a spreadsheet - they are the beating heart of our country. That's why public services are at the heart of this government's agenda. Earlier this month, I announced our spending plans for Britain's first year outside the EU.

A New Economic Plan for a new era. Thanks to the hard work of the British people and our responsible economic management we are able to invest an extra £13.4 billion in our public services.

This Spending Round will make a real difference in people's lives. That includes recruiting 20,000 new police officers, restoring our rightful reputation as the party of law and order. Increased funding for every school in the country and a renaissance for further education. Continuing our record investment in the NHS and making a large down-payment on social care.

These are the people's priorities. These are our priorities. And it's our Conservative government that is delivering on them.

Brexit was a wake-up call that we need to be better connected both across our country, and beyond our shores. One of the things I remember most from my international career is the energy in the air you can feel in places like Southeast Asia. The quick turnaround between vision to implementation - from new towns to new airports. It echoes our industrial revolution of the Victorian era - which laid the foundations for over a century - from the railway network to the electric telegraph.

That's the spirit we need to rekindle in Britain.

But the truth is, successive governments failed to invest enough for the long-term. We've started to put that right, but we can do more - a lot more. This government is going to build Britain's future, and bring in a new infrastructure revolution. Infrastructure is the foundation of everything. It's the new road that connects local communities. The bus you need to get to school. And the broadband that helps your small business trade around the world.

The full benefits of our infrastructure revolution may not be felt for some time. But the work must start here and now. So today I can announce the first wave of this revolution: the good kind of revolution.

Our roads are the arteries of our country. We will soon launch the new Roads Investment Strategy with £29 billion committed for strategic and local roads over the next five years. And today we are getting the shovels out early on several important road projects including upgrading the nearby M60 Simister Island, dualling the A66 Transpennine, and starting work on the A428 between Cambridge and Milton Keynes.

Now buses. They haven't been given the attention they deserve from politicians. But they are still the backbone of our public transport in most of the country.

Well, not only do you have a Chancellor with a well-known family connection to buses, but a PM who likes to paint them!

At the Spending Round we allocated £220 million to buses alone. This will form part of a National Bus Strategy next year.

Rolling out new 'superbus' networks, expanding our fleet of low emission buses, and delivering better value for money for passengers. And last but not least: connecting us to the modern, global digital economy with gigabit broadband.

We have rolled out superfast broadband but we have fallen behind many European countries on the next generation of technology. And as we catch-up I don't want any part of our country to fall behind others. So I can announce we are committing £5 billion to support full-fibre rollout to the hardest to reach 20% of the country.

All of these measures will level up areas of our country that feel left out. There are three principles that will underpin our approach to them.

First, we will be smart and responsible in the way we invest for the long-term. We can do this by taking advantage of incredibly low interest rates and borrowing-to-build, not borrowing-to-waste like the Labour years.

Second, we will have a bias towards anything that brings our country together. For a start that means protecting our United Kingdom. And I'd like to pay tribute to Ruth Davidson, for all she did to prevent a socialist-separatist alliance from running - from ruining - our country.

Thank you Ruth.

Bringing our country together also means rebalancing our economy. That's why the first big policy decision of this government was to support the development of house Rail. And we know it's no good just decreeing from on high what local areas need. Too many people already feel power is distant to them - be it in Brussels or Westminster.

So I can announce today we will bring forward a White Paper on further devolution in England. Giving more local areas more local powers to drive investments in the infrastructure and services they know they need. We already have four brilliant Conservative metro mayors - Let's get one in Manchester too!

And third, we will take a dynamic, market-driven approach to driving down our carbon emissions. Not only are we the first large economy to commit to Net Zero by 2050. Last week at the UN General Assembly our Prime Minister committed to doubling Britain's funding for global environmental and climate change programmes.

They are the approaches we will take in building Britain's future. And with so much at stake for our country right now, I'm impatient to get on with it. We have achieved so much in just ten weeks. And I'd like to thank our brilliant ministerial team in the Treasury: Rishi Sunak, Jesse Norman, John Glen, Simon Clarke. And our parliamentary team, Rachel Maclean, Lee Rowley and Mike Freer.

The final Conservative principle I want to talk about today is this. We believe in a society where everyone knows that if they work hard, and play by the rules then they will have every opportunity to succeed. They are our values. It's our mission to help people to get a job, get a home, get ahead.

But we do have to acknowledge that not everyone in every part of the country feels that they have all the opportunities they should have.

Not all parents feel that their children will have it better than they did.

We need to do more to level the playing field between regions and generations and give all young people the best start in life.

Last year I announced the Youth Endowment Fund, helping at-risk young people get off the conveyor belt to crime.

And I can announce today a new Youth Investment Fund.

This ambitious £500 million programme will roll out youth centres and services right across our country, helping millions more young people get on the conveyor belt to a better life and a better career.

Of course, one of the biggest concerns for the next generation is being able to buy a home. To claim their stake in our society. We're on track to increase housing supply to its highest level since 1970. But I know from my time as Housing Secretary that we need to do so much more, and the accelerated planning proposals Robert has announced today are just the start. Getting ahead. Getting a home.

The best way to achieve both those things is getting a good job. On our watch, 1,000 extra people have gone into work every day since 2010.

And this applies to all corners of our country with most of the new jobs being created outside London and the South East. 150,000 more people are in employment in Greater Manchester alone. Whenever I meet my counterparts in Europe, they ask me how we are doing it.

Real wages and household incomes are rising, putting more money in people's pockets. And with full employment and strong public finances, we are now in a position to see what more we can do to help workers and reduce the cost of living.

In 2016, we introduced the National Living Wage, giving Britain's workers the biggest pay rise in two decades.

In April, we increased the rate again, making 1.8 million workers better off, putting the number of low paid workers at its lowest level in four decades.

Today, I'm delighted to announce that we will take this much further. Over the next five years, we will make the UK the first major economy in the world to end low pay altogether. To do that, I am setting a new target for the National Living Wage: Raising it to match two-thirds of median earnings. That means, on current forecasts, this ambitious plan will bring the National Living Wage up to £10.50, giving four million people a well-earned pay rise.

And to help the next generation of go-getters to get ahead, we will reward the hard work of all millennials too, by bringing down the age threshold for the National Living Wage to cover all workers over the age of 21.

The hard work of the British people really is paying off. It's clear it's the Conservatives who are the real party of labour.

We are the workers party. Delivering Brexit. Boosting public services. Backing enterprise and hard work. And bringing our country together by levelling up across the nation and across generations.

That's the direction we are setting for our country. That's what will be on offer at the next election: A decade of renewal, or a decade of reversal.

We in this room are today's representatives of the most successful party in the Western world. An institution that has helped to build Britain for over two centuries.

And now in 2019, we have a duty to see the country through the challenges ahead.

We are the only party that can get Brexit done. We are the only party that can call ourselves democrats. And we are the only party that will truly deliver for workers. We are the Conservative & Unionist Party - and we will unite this country.

We are a responsible, One Nation party that focuses on what we have in common, not what divides us. We believe in building on the best of the past. Not just putting up with modern Britain, but embracing it. Saying loud and clear that we love our country, we are a welcoming, tolerant and fair society. The most successful multiracial democracy in the world. We are an open, global, trading nation. One of the most prosperous in the world.

And we are a compassionate, caring, country. Not just for those close to home, but also for some of the poorest in the world.

That's who we are.

That's what this party stands for.

And that's what we are delivering for our country.