**Ed Miliband's speech to Labour Party Annual Conference 2012**

**2 October 2012**

Ed Miliband MP, Leader of the Labour Party, said today in his speech to Labour Party conference in Manchester:

It is great to be in Labour Manchester. And you know Manchester has special memories for me because two years ago I was elected the leader of this party. I’m older. I feel a lot older actually. I hope I’m a bit wiser. But I am prouder than ever to be the Leader of the Labour Party.

You may have noticed that doing this job you get called some names, some of the nice, some of them not so nice. Let me tell you my favourite; it was when Mitt Romney came to Britain and called me ‘Mr Leader.’ I don’t know about you but I think it has a certain ring to it myself, it’s sort of half-way to North Korea. Mitt, thanks a lot for that.

Let me tell you a bit of insight in to Conference. I always look forward to Conference. But the Leader’s Speech, as previous leaders will attest, can be a bit of a trial. You get all kinds of advice from people. Say this, don't say that. Smile here, don’t smile there. Stand there, don’t stand there. Thanks Tony, Gordon and Neil for that. But sometimes you get a bit fed up with it as the Leader. And so the other day, and this is an absolutely true story, I decided that to get away from it all, the speechwriting, all of that, I’d go for a walk with my three year old son, Daniel. It was an absolutely gorgeous late summer day. So we went out, I wanted to go to the park. Here’s the first thing he said to me: “Daddy, I can help you with your speech.” I was like not you as well! He is a Miliband after all. And he said to me: “Daddy, you can't do it on your own.” This is absolutely true, and I said “well that’s a good Labour insight, you can’t do it all your own. Daniel what do you want in my speech?” He said “I want dinosaurs! I want dinosaurs, I want flying dinosaurs! I want dinosaurs that eat people daddy!” I said, “No Daniel. We tried predators last year.”

OK, look only one problem, where’s my speech? I want to do something different today. I want to tell you my story. I want to tell you who I am. What I believe. And why I have a deep conviction that together we can change this country. My conviction is rooted in my family’s story, a story that starts 1,000 miles from here, because the Miliband’s haven’t sat under the same oak tree for the last five hundred years.

Both of my parents’ came to Britain as immigrants, Jewish refugees from the Nazis. I know I would not be standing on this stage today without the compassion and tolerance of our great country. Great Britain.

And you know my parents saw Britain rebuilt after the Second World War. I was born in my local NHS hospital, the same hospital my two sons would later be born in. As you saw in the film I went to my local school. I went to my local comprehensive with people from all backgrounds. I still remember the amazing and inspiring teaching I got at that school, and one of my teachers, my English teacher, Chris Dunne, is here with us today. Thank you Chris and to all the teachers at Haverstock.

It was a really tough school, but order was kept by one of the scariest headmistress you could possibly imagine, Mrs Jenkins. And you know what? I learned at my school about a lot more than how to pass exams. I learned how to get on with people from all backgrounds, whoever they were.

I wouldn’t be standing on this stage today without my comprehensive school education.

So, Britain gave me, gave my family, a great gift that my parents never had. A safe and secure childhood. And you know my parents didn’t talk much about their early lives, it was too painful, it hurt too much. The pain of those they lost. The guilt of survivors. But I believe that their experience meant they brought up both David and myself differently as a result. Because having struggled for life itself, they instilled in us a sense of duty to ease the struggles of others. And this came not just from my parents’ wartime experience it came from the daily fabric of our childhood. You know there were toys and games, rows about homework. I was actually a Dallas fan, believe it or not, which didn’t go down well with my dad as you can imagine.

So of course there were the normal things, but every upbringing is special, and mine was special because of the place of politics within it. When I was twelve years old, I met a South African friend of my parents, her name was Ruth First. The image I remember is of somebody vivacious, full of life, full of laughter. And then I remember a few months later coming down to breakfast and seeing my mum in tears because Ruth First had been murdered by a letter bomb from the South African secret police. Murdered for being part of the anti-apartheid movement. Now I didn’t understand the ins and outs of it, but I was shocked. I was angry I knew that wasn’t the way the world was meant to be. I knew I had a duty to do something about it. It is this upbringing that has made me who I am. A person of faith, not a religious faith but a faith nonetheless. A faith, I believe, many religious people would recognise. So here is my faith. I believe we have a duty to leave the world a better pl ace than we found it. I believe we cannot shrug our shoulders at injustice, and just say that’s the way the world is. And I believe that we can overcome any odds if we come together as people.

That’s how my Mum survived the war. The kindness of strangers. Nuns in a convent who took her in and sheltered her from the Nazis, took in a Jewish girl at risk to themselves. It’s what my dad found when he came to these shores and joined the Royal Navy and was part of Britain winning the war.

Now of course my parents didn’t tell me what career to go into. My late father, as some of you know, wouldn’t agree with many of the things I stand for. He would’ve loved the idea of “Red Ed.” But he would have been a little bit disappointed that it isn’t true. My mum probably doesn’t agree with me either, but like most mums is too kind to say so. And look when I was younger I wasn’t certain I wanted to be a politician. But I do believe the best way me for to give back to Britain, the best way to be true to my faith, is through politics. Now that is not a fashionable view today. Because millions of people have given up on politics, they think we’re all the same. Well I guess you could say I am out to prove them wrong.

That is who I am. That is what I believe. That is my faith.

And I know who I need to serve in Britain with my faith. It’s the people I’ve met on my journey as Leader of the Opposition. The people who come up to me on trains, in the street, in shops who ask me about what the Labour Party is going to do for them and tell me the stories of their lives. It’s for them, the people I have met on my journey as Leader of the Opposition that today’s speech is for. You know I think of the young woman I met at a youth centre in London earlier this year. She was brimming with hopes and ambitions for the future. She was full of life. She was full of desire to get on and do the best for herself. And then she told me her story. She’d sent off her CV to 137 employers and she’d not had a reply from any of them. Many of you in this audience will know people in the same position. Just think how that crushes the hopes of a generation. I want to talk to her, to a whole generation of young people who feel that Britain under this Government is no t offering them a future.

I think back to the small businessman I met in July. A proud man called Alan Henderson, a small businessman. Let me tell you Alan Henderson’s story: He’d spent 40 years building up his sign making business, 40 years. He told me his story, he went to see his bank manager in 1972 at his local high street bank, he got a loan and he started his business. But something terrible happened to Alan Henderson and his family a few years back. He was ripped off by the bank he had been with all that time and Alan Henderson and his family have been living through a nightmare ever since. I want to talk to him, and all the people of Britain who feel they’re at the mercy of forces beyond their control.

I want to talk to all of the people of this country who always thought of themselves as comfortably off, but who now find themselves struggling to make ends meet. They ask: Why is it that when oil prices go up, the petrol price goes up. But when the oil price comes down, the petrol price just stays the same? They ask: Why is it that the gas and electricity bills just go up and up and up? And they ask: Why is it that the privatised train companies can make hundreds of millions of pounds in profit at the same time as train fares are going up by 10% a year? They think the system just doesn’t work for them. And you know what? They’re right. It doesn’t. It doesn’t work for them but for the cosy cartels and powerful interests that government hasn’t cut down to size. I want to talk to them and all the millions of people across our country who don’t think they get a fair crack of the whip.

And I want to say to them, yes our problems are deep. But they can be overcome. Deep problems about who Britain is run for and who prospers within it. One rule for those at the top, another rule for everybody else. Two nations, not one. I want to say to them today it’s not the Britain you believe in. It’s not the Britain I believe in. It’s not the Britain this party will ever be satisfied with. So friends we’re going to change it. And here’s how.

My faith that we can, starts with the inner strength of us as a country. You see the problem isn’t the British people, just think about the Olympics and Paralympic games. It was a triumph for Britain. And why did we succeed? We succeeded because of our outstanding athletes from, Zara Phillips the grand-daughter of a parachuting Queen, to a boy born in Somalia, called Mo Farah. Mo Farah. A true Brit. And a true hero for our country.

We succeeded because of the outstanding volunteers, the Games Makers who are here with us today, all 70,000 Games makers. They put a mirror up to Britain and showed us the best of ourselves. We succeeded because of our outstanding troops, our outstanding troops, many of whom were drafted in at the last minute. And let us today pay tribute to their bravery, their courage, their sacrifice in Afghanistan and all round the world. And let’s say to them, and let’s say to them, just as you do our duty by us in the most courageous way possible so we will always do our duty by you, both in military and in civilian life.

We succeeded because of our outstanding police and let us in this city of Manchester show our appreciation for what the extraordinary police men and women of our country do for our country.

And we succeeded and this is a real lesson, we succeeded because of a group of individuals, a group of individuals who saw the odds against London’s bid and thought, never mind the odds, we are going to fight for the bid for London, we are going to win the bid for London, from Seb Coe to our very own Dame Tessa Jowell.

And you know what friends, we succeeded, because of one reason more than any other, we succeeded because of us. We succeeded because of us, us the British people, us the British people who welcomed the athletes from abroad, who cheered them on. Who found ourselves talking to each other each morning about what had happened at the Olympics the night before, in a way that we hadn’t talked to each other before. We succeeded because we came together as a country we worked together as a country. We joined together as a country. That’s why we achieved more than we imagined possible.

You know, I’ll just tell you this. I can’t remember a time like it in the whole history of my lifetime. I can’t remember a time like it, that sense of a country united, that sense of a country that felt it was together. That is the spirit this Labour Party believes in.

But I may not remember that spirit, but that spirit has echoed through British history. You know one hundred and forty years ago, one hundred and forty years ago to the year. Another Leader of the Opposition gave a speech. It was in the Free Trade Hall that used to stand opposite this building. It’s the Radisson now by the way. His name was Benjamin Disraeli. He was a Tory. But don’t let that but you off, just for a minute. His speech took over three hours to deliver, don’t’ worry, don’t worry, and he drank two whole bottles of brandy while delivering it. That is absolutely true. Now look, I just want to say, I know a speech that long would probably kill you. And the brandy would definitely kill me. But let us remember what Disraeli was celebrated for.

It was a vision of Britain. A vision of a Britain where patriotism, loyalty, dedication to the common cause courses through the veins of all and nobody feels left out. It was a vision of Britain coming together to overcome the challenges we faced. Disraeli called it “One Nation”. “One Nation”. We heard the phrase again as the country came together to defeat fascism. And we heard it again as Clement Attlee’s Labour government rebuilt Britain after the war.

Friends, I didn’t become leader of the Labour Party to reinvent the world of Disraeli or Attlee. But I do believe in that spirit. That spirit of One Nation. One Nation: a country where everyone has a stake. One Nation: a country where prosperity is fairly shared. One Nation: where we have a shared destiny, a sense of shared endeavour and a common life that we lead together. That is my vision of One Nation. That is my vision of Britain. That is the Britain we must become.

And here is the genius of One Nation. It doesn’t just tell us the country we can be. It tells us how we must rebuild. We won the war because we were One Nation. We built the peace because Labour government’s and Conservative, governments understood we needed to be One Nation. Every time Britain has faced its gravest challenge, we have only come through the storm because we were One Nation. But too often governments have forgotten that lesson.

With one million young people out of work, we just can’t succeed as a country. With the gap between rich and poor growing wider and wider, we just can’t succeed as a country. With millions of people feeling that hard work and effort are not rewarded, we just can’t succeed as a country. And with so many people having been told for so long that the only way to get on is to be on your own, in it for yourself, we just can’t succeed as a country. Yes friends, to come through the storm, to overcome the challenges we face, we must rediscover that spirit. That spirit the British people never forgot. That spirit of One Nation. One Nation. A country where everyone plays their part. A country we rebuild together.

So here is the big question of today. Who can make us One Nation? Who can bring Britain together? What about the Tories? What about the Tories? I didn’t hear you, what about the Tories?

Let me explain why, let me explain why. I want to talk very directly to those who voted for David Cameron at the last general election. I understand why you voted for him. I understand why you turned away from the last Labour government. This Government took power in difficult economic times. It was a country still coming to terms with the financial crisis. A financial crisis that has afflicted every country round the world. I understand why you were willing to give David Cameron the benefit of the doubt.

But I think we’ve had long enough to make a judgement. Long enough to make a judgement because they turned a recovery into the longest double dip recession since the war. Because there are more people looking for work for longer than at any time since the last time there was a Conservative government.

And here is the other thing, what about borrowing? Borrowing. The thing they said was their number one priority. This year borrowing is rising not falling. Let me just say that again. Borrowing the thing they said was the most important priority, the reason they were elected. It is rising not falling.

Not because there hasn’t been pain and tax rises and cuts affecting every family in this country. Not because they didn’t want to cut it borrowing. They did. Not because your services aren’t getting worse. They are. But because if you stop an economy growing, then it leaves more people out of work claiming benefits, not paying taxes. Businesses struggle so they’re not paying taxes. And as a result borrowing goes up. Borrowing not to invest in schools, in hospitals, transport and education. But borrowing to keep people idle. So the next time you hear a Conservative say to you Labour would increase borrowing, just remember it is this government that is increasing borrowing this year.

So what have we seen? We’ve seen recession, higher unemployment, higher borrowing. I don’t think that’s what people were promised. Now look there will be some people who say, and this is an important argument, they’ll be some people who say: ‘Well there is short-term pain but it is worth it for the long-term gain.’ But I’m afraid the opposite is true.

You see that the longer you have low growth in our country the bigger the debt hole becomes for the future and the bigger our problems will be in the future. The longer a young person is out of work that is not just bad for their prospects now; it is bad for their prospects for the whole of the rest of their lives. And if a small business goes under during the recession, it can’t just get back up and running again during the recovery.

So when David Cameron says to you: ‘Well let’s just carry on as we are and wait for something to turn up.’ Don’t believe him. Don’t believe him. If the medicine’s not working you change the medicine. And friends, I’ll tell you what else you change. You change the doctor too. And that is what this country needs to do.

Now look around you, you know the problem is the British people are paying the price of this government’s failure. You’re going to the petrol station and not filling up your tank because you can’t afford it. Your tax credits are being cut because the Government says it can’t afford it. Your frail mum and dad are not getting the care they need because the Government says it can’t afford it.

But there are some things this Government can afford. The wrong things. What do they think at this most difficult economic time is going to get us out of our difficulties? What do they choose as their priority? A tax cut for millionaires. A tax cut for millionaires. Next April, David Cameron will be writing a cheque for £40,000 to each and every millionaire in Britain. Not just for one year. But each and every year. That is more than the average person earns in a whole year. At the same time as they’re imposing a tax on pensioners next April. Friends, we, the Labour Party, the country knows it is wrong. It is wrong what they’re doing. It shows their priorities.

And here’s the worse part. David Cameron isn’t just writing the cheques. He is receiving one. He’s going to be getting the millionaire’s tax cut. So next week maybe Mr Cameron can tell us how much is he awarding himself in a tax cut? How much is that tax cut he is awarding himself? For a job I guess he thinks is a job well done. How many of his other Cabinet colleagues have cheques in the post from the millionaire’s tax cut? And how can he justify this unfairness in Britain 2012.

And of course let’s not forget this tax cut wouldn’t be happening without Nick Clegg and the Liberal Democrats. Isn’t it shameful that the party that supported, that implemented the People’s Budget of 1909, Lloyd George’s budget, is supporting the millionaire’s budget of 2012.

So that’s the reality in Britain today. It is a rebate for the top. It’s rip-off for everybody else. It’s a recovery for the top. It’s a recession for everybody else. This Prime Minister said: ‘We are all in it together.’ Don’t let him ever tell us again we are all in this together.

And friends I say this. You can’t be a One Nation Prime Minister if you raise taxes on ordinary families and cut taxes for millionaires. You can’t be a One Nation Prime Minister if all you do is seek to divide the country. Divide the country between north and south. Public and private. Those who can work and those who can’t work. And you can’t be a One Nation Prime Minister if your Chief Whip insults the great police officers of our country by calling them plebs.

But there is one thing that this Government might have claimed to be good at, and that is competence. Because after all, they think they’re born to rule. So maybe they’d be good at it. Have you ever seen a more incompetent, hopeless, out of touch, u-turning, pledge-breaking, make it up as you go along, back of the envelope, miserable shower than this Prime Minister and this Government?

There’s more there’s more, not quite Disraeli but there is more. What have we had. We’ve had the caravan tax, we’ve had the churches tax, we’ve had the pasty tax, we’ve had the granny tax, we’ve had panic at the pumps, we’ve had dinners for donors, we’ve had country supers with Rebekah Brooks. He even rode the horse. He sent the texts, he sent the texts. Remember LOL.

And now what do we have. We have the Minister for Murdoch becoming the Minister for the National Health Service. We have an International Development Secretary; she says she doesn’t believe in international development. And get this, we’ve got a Party Chairman who writes books about how to beat the recession, under a false name. Really, I’m not making this up; I’m really not making this up. I mean I have to say if I was Chairman of the Conservative Party, I’d have a false name too.

But here is my favourite one of all. There’s one more, here’s my favourite one of all. There is even a bloke, and I think they call him Lord Hill who went to see the Prime Minister. He made an appointment during the last reshuffle in order to resign. But David Cameron was too incompetent to notice that he wanted to resign. So Lord Hill is still in the Government. This lot are so useless they can’t even resign properly.

So they’re not going to build One Nation, so it is up to us.

And let me say to you, One Nation is not a way of avoiding the difficult decisions, it is a way of making the difficult decisions. And I’ve just got to be very clear about this and about what we face as the next Labour government. You see I think it is incredibly important that to be One Nation we must show compassion and support for all those who cannot work. Particularly the disabled men and women of our country. But in order to do so, those who can work have a responsibility to do so. We can’t leave people languishing out of work, for one year, two years, three years. We’ve got a responsibility to help them and they’ve got a responsibility to take the work that is on offer.

To be One Nation, we have got to give much greater dignity to our elderly population because you know, we’re going to have to tackle the care crisis that faces so many families up and down this country. And look, living longer should be one of the great virtues of the 21st century. But friends, in order to be able to afford to do that, we are going to have to work longer; have a later retirement age than we do now.

To be One Nation, we have got to live within our means. And because borrowing is getting worse not better, it means there will be many cuts that this Government made that we won’t be able to reverse even though we would like to. And that’s why we’ve said in this Parliament that we’d put jobs before pay in the public sector. And in the next Parliament we will have tough settlements for the public services and that will make life harder for those who use them and harder for those who work in them.

But here is the big difference between a One Nation government led by me, and this Government. Those with the broadest shoulders will always bear the greatest burden. I would never cut taxes for millionaires and raise them on ordinary families. That is wrong, that is not being One Nation. And here is the other thing, I will never accept an economy where the gap between rich and poor just grows wider and wider. In One Nation, in my faith, inequality matters. It matters to our country.

Now what does it mean to the Labour Party to be One Nation? It means we can’t go back to Old Labour. We must be the party of the private sector just as much as the party of the public sector. As much the party of the small business struggling against the odds, as the home help struggling against the cuts. We must be the party of south just as much as the party of the north. And we must be the party as much of the squeezed middle as those in poverty. There is no future for this party as the party of one sectional interest of our country.

But so too it is right to move on from New Labour because New Labour, despite its great achievements, was too silent about the responsibilities of those at the top, and too timid about the accountability of those with power. In One Nation responsibility goes all the way to the top of society. The richest in society have the biggest responsibility to show responsibility to the rest of our country. And I’ve got news for the powerful interests in our country, in One Nation no interest, from Rupert Murdoch to the banks, is too powerful to be held to account.

So we must be a One Nation party to become a One Nation government, to build a One Nation Britain. And here’s how we are going to take these steps to do that.

We need a One Nation economy and the first big mission of the next Labour government is to sort out our banks. Sort them out once and for all. Not just to prevent another crisis but to do what hasn’t been done in decades. Necessary to enable us to pay our way in the world. We need banks that serve the country not a country that serves its banks.

Think about Alan Henderson, the small businessman I talked about earlier on. He wanted to be able to go into his bank, look his high street manager in the eye and know that he was working for him. Instead he found a bank more interested in playing the international money markets. That’s why he was ripped off.

Of course, this government promised change, but things aren’t really changing. So I have got a message for the banks, we can do this the easy way or the hard way. Either you fix it yourselves between now and the election or the next Labour government will once and for all ensure that the high street bank is no longer the arm of a casino operation and we will break you up by law.

Now look friends, there will be some people who say this is all too radical, let’s just carry in as we are. I say we can’t carry on as we are. We can’t carry on as we are, two nations not one. The banks and the rest of Britain. We must have a One Nation banking system as part of a One Nation economy.

Next, we need an education system that works for all young people. You see, to be a One Nation economy you have got to use all the talents of all of our young people. It’s not just that it’s socially right, it is absolutely essential for our economy for the future.

I remember when Chris and I were at Haverstock. I remember at Haverstock school, my comprehensive, the kids who were good at passing exams, who were academic, they could go to university and the world would just open up for them like it did for me. But think about all those kids who had talent and ability, great talent and ability. School just didn’t offer them enough. It was true twenty five years ago, and it is even more true today.

Just think in your minds eye about the 14 year old today. Today is a school day. Think about that 14 year old, not academic, already bored at school, maybe already starting that process of truanting, of not going to school. Now of course they need to get back to school and their parents need to get them back to school. They can’t afford to drift through life with no qualifications and Britain can’t afford for them to do it either. But we can’t just say to that 14 year old just put in the work, because we have been failing them too. You see for a long time our party has been focused on getting 50% of young people into university. I believe that was right. But now it’s time to put our focus on the forgotten 50% who do not go to university.

Here’s the choice that I want to offer to that 14 year old who is not academic. English and maths to 18 because rigour in the curriculum matters. But courses that engage them and are relevant to them. Work experience with employers. And then culminating at the age of 18 with a new gold standard qualification so they know when they are taking that exam they have a gold standard vocational qualification, a new Technical Baccalaureate. A qualification to be proud of. You know, we’ve got to change the culture of this country friends. We can’t be a country where vocational qualifications are seen as second class.

They are a real route to apprenticeships and jobs. They can be as valuable to our young people as a university degree. We need to make it so.

So we’ve got to change the culture in this country and there needs to be that real route to apprenticeships but let me tell you though, there is another problem. Only one in three large employers in Britain actually offers apprenticeships. And if anything, in the public sector the situation is far far worse. That is about a culture of a country. That’s about a culture of a country which hasn’t been dealt with for decades. It is the task of the next Labour government to do that. So the public sector is going to have to step up to the plate and understand we can’t be two nations. We can’t be two nations. And when the public sector offers contracts to the private sector the next Labour government will ensure that every private sector contract will only be awarded to a large company that trains the next generation with apprenticeships. Because when the public sector is having a contract with a private sector company, it is not just buying goods and services, it must be about building One Nation together. Public and private sectors joining together to do it.

And we need a new deal with British business. You get the money, you get control of the money for training, as you have long asked for, you set the standards, as you have long asked for. But you have a responsibility to make sure the training happens. In One Nation there is no place for free riding. Free riding where firms that don’t train poach workers from firms that do.

Now think about this vision of education. Education to the age of 18 with proper vocational qualifications, and then think about the vision on offer from the Conservatives. Michael Gove. Michael Gove, who wanted to bring back two-tier academic exams. I remember what that was like. O-levels and CSEs one whole group of young people written off. We are not going back to those days. Michael Gove who has contempt for vocational qualifications and has abolished some of the best vocational qualifications our country has. And Michael Gove who has nothing to say about education to 18.

So in education there really is a choice of two futures. Education for a narrower and narrower elite, with the Conservatives. Or a One Nation skills system as part of a One Nation economy with the next Labour government.

To be a One Nation economy we have to make life just that bit easier for the producers, and that bit harder for the predators. “Predators and producers”, I think one year on people know what I was talking about. You see businesses tell me that the pressure for the fast buck from City investors means they just can’t take the long view. They want to plan one year, two years, ten years ahead but they have to publish their accounts in Britain every 3 months. In line with the wishes of the best of British business, we will end that rule so companies in Britain can take the long term productive view for our country.

Companies in Britain are far more easily bought and sold than in many other countries. Do you know that when a takeover is launched the hedge funds and the speculators can swoop in for a quick profit. They are not acting in the interests of firms or the nation. They are just in it for the fast buck. It is wrong and we will change it.

And here is the thing, ladies and gentlemen, I invite British businesses - work with us in advance of the next Labour government. Let’s refound the rules of the game so we have a One Nation business model as part of a One Nation economy for our country.

So friends, in banks, in education in the rules of the game for companies –One Nation gives us an urgent call of change. But One Nation is not just about the things we need to change, it is about the things we need to conserve as well. Saying that doesn’t make me a Conservative. Our common way of life matters.

My vision of One Nation is an outward looking country. A country which engages with Europe and the rest of the world. I am incredibly proud to be the son of immigrant parents. I am incredibly proud of the multi-ethnic diverse Britain which won us the Olympic bid. The Olympics saw that kind of country here in Britain. But to make that Britain work. To make that vision work for our country, immigration must work for all and not just some. And friends, too often in the past we have overlooked those concerns, dismissed them too easily.

Here is how my approach is going to be different both from the last Labour government and this Conservative government. You see we need secure management of out borders, we need competent management of the system. But here is the big change, it is about the way our economy works. You see, immigration has really significant economic benefits but not when it is used to undercut workers already here and exploit people coming here.

The last Labour government didn’t do enough to address these concerns and the Tories never will. So the next Labour government will crack down on employers who don’t pay the minimum wage. We will stop recruitment agencies just saying they are only going to hire people from overseas. And we will end the shady practices, in the construction industry and elsewhere, of gang-masters. So we need a system of immigration that works for the whole country and not just for some.

You know there is no more important area of our common life than the United Kingdom itself. Now one of the four countries, Scotland, will be deciding in the next two years whether to stay or to go. I want to be quite clear about this, Scotland could leave the United Kingdom. But I believe we would be far worse off as a result. Not just in pounds and pence but in the soul of our nation. You see I don’t believe that solidarity stops at the border. I care as much about a young person unemployed in Motherwell as I do about a young person unemployed here in Manchester. We have common bonds, we have deep bonds with each other. The people of Scotland and the people of the rest of the United Kingdom. And by the way, if you think about the people of Scotland and the Olympic games, they weren’t cheering on just the Scottish athletes of Team GB, they were cheering on all the athletes of Team GB. That’s what the SNP don’t understand. And why would a party that claims to be left o f centre turn its back on the redistribution, the solidarity, the common bonds of the United Kingdom? Friends it is up to us. It is up to us, we the Labour Party must be the people who fight, defend and win the battle for the United Kingdom.

And after the United Kingdom itself there is no more important area of our common life than the NHS.

The magic of the NHS for me is that you don’t leave your credit card at the door. The NHS, it’s based on a whole different set of values, a whole different set of values that the people of Britain love. Not values of markets, money and exchange but values of compassion, care and co-operation. That is the magic of the NHS; that is why the British people love the NHS and I’m afraid the Tories have shown in government it’s something they just don’t understand.

Remember before the last election, remember those airbrushed posters? ‘I’ll protect the NHS’ with that picture of David Cameron. Remember those speeches? The three most important letters to me, he said, were N-H-S. It was a solemn contract with the British people. And then what did he do? He came along after the election and proposed a top-down reorganisation that nobody voted for, that nobody knew about and nobody wanted. And here’s the worst part. When it became unpopular he paused. Remember the pause? He said he wanted to listen, and what happened? The GPs said no. The nurses said no. The paediatricians said no. The radiologists said no. The patients said no. And the British people said no. And what did he do? He ploughed on regardless. He broke his solemn contract with the British people, a contract that can never be repaired.

Let me tell what I hate about this reorganisation; let me tell you what I hate. I hate the waste, I hate the waste of billions of pounds at a time the NHS has its worst settlement, its most difficult settlement for a generation. I hate the fact that there are 5,500 fewer nurses than when David Cameron came to power. Think of what he could have done if he hadn’t spent billions of pounds on that top-down reorganisation and had used the money to employ nurses, rather than sacking them. But here’s what I hate most of all. It’s that the whole way they designed this NHS reorganisation was based on the model of competition that there was in the privatised utility industry, gas, energy and water. What does that tell you about these Tories? What does that tell you about the way they don’t understand the values of the NHS? The NHS isn’t like the gas, electricity and water industries. The NHS is the pride of Britain. The NHS is based on a whole different set of values for our country. Friends, it just shows that the old adage is truer now than it ever was: You just can’t trust the Tories on the NHS.

So let me be clear, let me be clear, the next Labour government will end the free market experiment, it will put the right principles back at the heart of the NHS and it will repeal the NHS Bill.

So friends, this is where I stand. This is who I am. This is what I believe. This is my faith.

You know, I was talking to my mum this morning, as you do before a big speech, and she reminded me her mother was born in a small Polish village in 1909. I went back to that village with my mum about a decade ago. About 2,000 people live there and it’s quite an event having people from England coming over. It feels a long way from that village, and what my parents experienced, to this stage today. You see Britain has given my family everything. Britain has given my family everything. Britain and the spirit, the determination, the courage of the people who rebuilt Britain after the Second World War. And now the question is asked again: who in this generation will rebuild Britain for the future? Who can come up to the task of rebuilding Britain? Friends, it falls to us, it falls to us, the Labour Party. As it has fallen to previous generations of Labour Party pioneers to leave our country a better place than we found it. Never to shrug our shoulders at injustice and say that is the way the world is. To come together, to join together, to work together as a country.

It’s not some impossible dream. We’ve heard it, we’ve seen it, we’ve felt it. That is my faith.

One nation: a country for all, with everyone playing their part. A Britain we rebuild together.