

## **UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown's Speech to the 2008 Labour Party Conference**

*23 September 2008*

I want to talk with you today about who I am, what I believe, what I am determined to lead this party and this great country to achieve.

As we gather here today I know people have real concerns about the future of the country, the future of the economy and people in this hall have concerns about the future of our party too.

And so I want to answer your questions directly, to talk with you about how amidst all the present difficulties we should be more confident than ever that we can build what I want to talk to you about today. A new settlement for new times. A fair Britain for the new age.

But let me start with something I hope you know already.

I didn't come into politics to be a celebrity or thinking I'd always be popular. Perhaps, that's just as well. No, 25 years ago I asked the people of Fife to send me to parliament to serve the country I love.

And I didn't come to London because I wanted to join the establishment, but because I wanted and want to change it.

So I'm not going to try to be something I'm not.

And if people say I'm too serious, quite honestly there's a lot to be serious about - I'm serious about doing a serious job for all the people of this country.

What angers me and inspires me to act is when people are treated unfairly.

So when people share with me stories about the hard time they're having with bills, I want to help, because I was brought up seeing my parents having to juggle their budget like the rest of us.

And when I talk to parents about schools, I'm determined that every child should have a good school, because while I got my break in a great local secondary, not all my friends got the chance to get on.

And when I speak to victims of crime I get angry - because like them I know the difference between right and wrong.

And so here I am - working for this incredible country, while trying as far as possible to give my children an ordinary childhood. Some people have been asking why I haven't served my children up for spreads in the papers. And my answer is simple. My children aren't props; they're people.

And where I've made mistakes I'll put my hand up and try to put them right. So what happened with 10p stung me because it really hurt that suddenly people felt I wasn't on the side of people on middle and modest incomes - because on the side of hard-working families is the only place I've ever wanted to be. And from now on it's the only place I ever will be.

And so I want to give the people of this country an unconditional assurance - no ifs, no buts, no small print - my unwavering focus is taking this country through the challenging economic circumstances we face and building the fair society of the future.

The British people would not forgive us if at this time we looked inwards to the affairs of just our party when our duty is to the interests of our country.

The people of Britain would never forget if we failed to put them first - and friends, they'd be right.

And because this is a time of greater than ever change around us, it must be a time of higher ambition from us. And because the world of 2008 is now so different from the world of 1997 I want to talk about the new settlement we must build for these new times.

You know, each generation believes it is living through changes their parents could never have imagined - but the collapse of banks, the credit crunch, the trebling of oil prices, the speed of technology, and the rise of Asia - nobody now can be in any doubt that we are in a different world and it's now a global age.

In truth, we haven't seen anything this big since the industrial revolution. This last week will be studied by our children - as the week the world was spun on its axis - and old certainties were turned on their heads.

And in these uncertain times, we must be, we will be, the rock of stability and fairness upon which people stand.

And friends, it's a calling that summons us because in every time of profound change those with great wealth and privilege have always been able to look after themselves.

But our duty, what gives us moral purpose, is serving the people who need us most- Britain's vast majority - people on middle and modest incomes who need to know that they are not on their own amidst this change - we are on their side.

Where there are new risks and new pressures our duty is and will be security for all. And where there are new opportunities, our duty is and will be fair chances for everyone matched by fair rules applied to everyone.

And insuring people against the new risks and empowering people with new opportunities is the mission of the hour. And those who say that governments should walk away when people face these risks and need these opportunities will be judged to be on the wrong side of history.

And when the country is asking their government to meet these new challenges I say to our

opponents: those who don't believe in the potential of government shouldn't be trusted to form one.

So this is a defining moment for us - a test not just of our judgement but of our values. Today once again we are called to apply our enduring beliefs to completely new conditions.

New Labour has always been at its best when we have applied our values to changing times. In the 1990s Tony and I asked you to change policy to meet new challenges.

We are and will always be a pro-enterprise, pro-business and pro-competition government. And we believe the dynamism of our five million businesses large and small is vital to the success of our country.

But the continuing market turbulence shows why we now need a new settlement for these times - a settlement that we as a pro-market party must pursue.

A settlement where the rewards are for what really matters - hard work, effort and enterprise.

A settlement where both markets and government are seen to be the servants of the people, and never their masters,

Where what counts is not the pursuit of any sectional interest but the advancement of the public interest - and where at all times we put people first.

Let us be clear the modern role of government is not to provide everything, but it must be to enable everyone.

And just as we know that governments cannot and should not do everything, so too we know markets cannot deliver it all on their own.

And just as those who supported the dogma of big government were proved wrong, so too those who argue for the dogma of unbridled free market forces have been proved wrong.

And so it falls to this party and to this government, with its commitment both to fairness and to business, to propose and deliver what after recent events everyone should now be willing to accept - that we do all it takes to stabilise the still turbulent financial markets and then in the months ahead we rebuild the world financial system around clear principles. And friends the work begins tomorrow.

I and then Alistair will meet financial and government leaders in New York to make these proposals:

First, transparency - all transactions need to be transparent and not hidden.

Second, sound banking, a requirement to demonstrate that risks can be managed and priced for bad times as well as good.

Third, responsibility - no member of a bank's board should be able to say they did not understand the risks they were running and walk away from them.

Fourth, integrity - removing conflicts of interest so that bonuses should not be based on short term speculative deals but on hard work, effort and enterprise.

I know that the British people think it's hard work, effort and enterprise we need to reward.

And fifth, global standards and supervision because the flows of capital are global, then supervision can no longer just be national but has to be global.

And if we make these changes I believe London will retain its rightful place as the financial centre of the world.

And we know that the challenges we face in this new global age didn't begin in the last week, or in the last months, but in fact reflect deeper changes in our world. For all its benefits, the global age has revealed not just financial instability but another major pressure - a rising global population demanding more energy.

So the new settlement also requires another great and historic endeavour to end the dictatorship of oil and to avert catastrophic climate change, a transformation in our use of energy. New nuclear power, an unprecedented increase in renewables and investment in clean coal.

And I am asking the climate change committee to report by October on the case for, by 2050 not a 60% reduction in our carbon emissions, but an 80% cut - and I want British companies and British workers to seize the opportunity and lead the world in the transformation to a low carbon economy and I believe that we can create in modern green manufacturing and service one million new jobs.

And it's not just our duty but our basic philosophy that we do everything we can to help families through the world downturn. And while the Conservatives did nothing to help people with their gas and electricity bills in the last world downturn, this winter, millions of people will receive the help with heating bills, insulation, social tariffs - help they never received from the Conservatives.

But you know, when it comes to public spending you can't just wave a magic wand to conjure up the money - not even with help from Harry Potter.

And so there are tough choices and I have to say that as a result of the events of recent weeks there are going to be tougher choices we will have to make and priorities we will have to choose. And just as families have to make economies to make ends meet, so this government must and will ensure that we get value for money out of every single pound of your money that is spent. But I say to you that we will invest it wisely, continuing our record investment in schools, Sure Start centres, transport and hospitals.

And if we make the right decisions to take people through the world downturn fairly we will find that, despite the current troubles, British firms and British workers can reap the rewards of a world economy set to double in size.

With Britain's great assets - our stability, our openness, our scientific genius, our creative industries, and yes our English language - I know that this can be a British century and I'm determined it will be.

But my argument today is that the new settlement for the global age must do even more to empower people with new opportunities insure people against new risks and as a result value hard work effort and enterprise. It's the economy that's been making the headlines, but there are other big changes too.

People feel their communities are changing before their eyes and it's increasing their anxiety about crime and anti-social behaviour. And so we will be the party of law and order.

And for the first time ever we've got more British pensioners than British children - more people living longer on fixed incomes and worried about whether they'll need long term care. And so we will be the party that will ensure security and dignity for pensioners.

And there are new pressures on parents - worrying about balancing work and family life but also about advertising aimed straight at their children and what their children are watching or downloading from the internet. And so we will be the party of the family.

And so the new settlement for our times show how Britain can meet all these challenges too and its more than about a fair prosperity - it must be about fair chances and fair rules too.

You know some people say that there's an inevitable political cycle in this country - as sure as night follows day. I don't agree. The challenge of these new times demands a truly progressive government to help people cope with the new risks and make the most of the new opportunities. That's why I believe that now more than ever - even more than in 1997- this country needs a Labour government.

You know to govern is to choose - and it's what a government chooses to do when it's tested that demonstrates its priorities and reveals its heart.

It is not the arithmetic of statistics but the fabric of people's lives.

When we talk about three million more people in work since 1997 - that's not just a number, that's a life that's been changed - three million times over. That's the young woman laid off in the mid 90's who's now built a booming business of her own. Three million new jobs not by accident, but by our actions. And in the years to come we will demonstrate again that real power of Labour to change lives.

And when we talk about the one million small and medium-sized businesses set up in the last eleven years, that's not just a number - that's the entrepreneur who can treat her parents to a summer holiday, and the local businessman who's taken on two local teenagers as apprentices. One million new businesses demonstrating yet again the real power of Labour to change lives.

And when we talk about one million people benefiting from new Labour's minimum wage that's not just a number - that's a dad doing security shifts who can now afford a birthday party for his child and it's a mum who doesn't have to go to a loan shark to pay for her kids' Christmas. One million people freed from exploitation- and now the minimum wage rising year on year - that's the real power of Labour to change lives.

And when we talk about the 240,000 lives that are saved by the progress Labour's NHS has made in fighting cancer and heart disease, that's not just a number - that's the dad who lives to walk his daughter up the aisle and the gran who is there to clap and cry at her grandson's graduation. 240,000 families still together - and now thousands more with new and better treatments from an expanding NHS -- we're changing the world the only way it can ever really change - one life, one family, one hope at a time. That's the real power of Labour to change lives.

And why do we always strive for fairness?

Not because it makes good soundbites.

Not because it gives good photo opportunities.

Not because it makes for good P.R.

No.

We do it because fairness is in our DNA.

It's who we are - and what we're for.

It's why Labour exists.

It's our first instinct, the soul of our party.

It's why when things get tough, we get tougher. We stand up, we fight hard - for fairness. We don't give in, and we never will.

For me fairness is treating others how we would be treated ourselves. So it isn't levelling down but empowering people to aspire and reach ever higher. And to take advantage of all the opportunities of the global economy I want to unleash a new wave of rising social mobility across our country.

For too long we've developed only some of the talents of some people - but the modern route to social mobility is developing all the talents of all the people....helping those who are working their way up from very little and lifting up those in the middle who want to get on. It means supporting what really matters - hard work and effort and enterprise. This is not just the new economic necessity, it is the modern test of social justice and the radical centre ground we occupy and will expand.

And fairness is why Harriet is introducing the first ever equalities bill. And let me thank her for her tireless work as deputy party leader.

Fairness is why Ed Miliband is ensuring that community and third sector organisations can play their proper part in every neighbourhood.

And it is why our whole party is leading the fight against the British National Party.

Fairness is why John Denham is extending university access, why Ruth Kelly has introduced for the first time free bus travel for pensioners and why John Hutton and our Labour Members of the

European Parliament but are fighting to free agency workers from the scourge of exploitation.

But fairness for the future also means a big change that I want to explain today. We have always stood for public services that are universal, available to all. Now we must stand for public services that are not only available to all, but personal to each.

For me, the fairer future starts with putting children first - with the biggest investment in children this country has ever seen. It means delivering the best possible start in life with services tailored to the needs of every single precious child.

In 1997 there were no Sure Start centres and nursery education for only the few. Today, thanks to the work of Beverley Hughes there are children's centres opening in every community to serve 3 million children who a few years ago had nothing, and free nursery education for every three and four year old.

But our ambitions must be greater still. I want Britain to take its place among the leading nations in pre-school services, and so I pledge here today in Manchester starting in over 30 communities, and then over 60, we will, stage by stage, extend free nursery places for two year olds for every parent who wants them in every part of the country backed by high quality, affordable childcare for all.

That's the fairness parents want - and that's the fairness every Labour party member will go out and fight for.

And because child poverty demeans Britain, we have committed our party to tackle and to end it. The measures we have taken this year alone will help lift two hundred and fifty thousand children out of poverty. The economic times are tough of course that makes things harder- but we are in this for the long haul - the complete elimination of child poverty by 2020. And so today I announce my intention to introduce ground-breaking legislation to enshrine in law Labour's pledge to end child poverty.

And Ed Balls and I will never excuse, explain away or tolerate low standards in education. So we will keep up the pace of reform: more academies, trust and specialist schools, more of the brightest and best graduates becoming teachers, more investment in building schools for the future - state of the art schools for world class schooling.

Fairness demands nothing less than excellence in every school, for every child. So today I guarantee to parents two fundamental rights:

Because every child should leave primary school able to read, write and count, any child who falls behind will not be left behind - but will now have a new guaranteed right to personal catch up tuition.

And because all parents should see their children taught in schools which achieve good results at GCSE, our pledge today is that any parents whose local state school falls below the expected standard will have the right to see that school transformed under wholly new leadership, or closed and new school places provided.

And we want to enable all families to use the internet to link back to their children's school - and so Jim Knight is announcing that we will fund over a million extra families to get online, on the way to our ambition of Britain leading the world with more of our people than any other major economy able to access the internet and broadband.

And now as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the NHS let me on behalf of all of us here, and all the people of the country - thank all the NHS staff - the cooks and cleaners, the paramedics and porters, the doctors and midwives and nurses.

You have served our country and served a great ideal - the principle that in a fair society health-care should not be a commodity to be bought by some but a right to be enjoyed by all.

Labour is the party of the NHS - we created it, we saved it, we value it and we always will support it.

And you know already that for me, this isn't a political agenda but a personal mission. Last year in Bournemouth I told you how when I was 16, I got injured playing rugby and lost the sight forever in my left eye. I knew I couldn't play football or rugby anymore. But I could still read.

But what I didn't tell you last year was that then one morning I woke up and realised my sight was going in my good eye. I had another operation and lay in the darkness for days on end. At that point my future was books on tape.

But thanks to the NHS, my sight was saved by care my parents could never have afforded. And so it's precisely because I know and have heard from others about the miraculous difference a great surgeon and great nurses and great care can make that I'm so passionate about the values of the NHS and so committed to reforming it to serve these values even better.

That's why in just one year in the fight against hospital infections, we have doubled the number of matrons and achieved a 36 percent reduction in MRSA.

And let us remember what a Labour government has now achieved: the lowest ever waiting times in the whole history of the NHS.

And now to respond to new times and higher aspirations we want to make the National Health Service more personal to people's needs - patients more involved in their own health care with more choice and more control than ever before.

And I've always found it unfair that we cannot offer on the NHS the comprehensive services that private patients can afford to buy. And so in April a Labour Britain will become the first country in the whole world to offer free universal check ups for everyone over 40.

And I say that there is no vested interest, no matter how powerful, that we are not prepared to take on when change is needed for the sake of the nation's health.

We have already made it easier for busy families to go to the doctor. Whilst a year ago only 1 in 10 patients had access to GPs at weekends and in the evening. Now almost half of all practices are open and by the end of next year the majority will be open even longer.

And today I want to show how this government will pursue what I believe to be one of the noblest and boldest contributions of this country to our shared human fortunes.

Since the war nearly one third of Britain's Nobel prizes have been for our genius in medicine. We should now aspire to stretch the boundaries of human knowledge and human health ever further.

I want Britain to lead the world in beating the diseases which cause so much heartbreak for families. Over the last few years we've made major breakthroughs in research relevant to cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and strokes and many more.

But these are yet to be turned into treatments from, which we can all benefit from. And so let me tell you today that the unprecedented 15 billion pounds we are investing in medical research will be directed to turning the major advances of the last few years into actual treatments and cures for NHS patients.

Over the next decade we can lead the way in beating cancer and other diseases - a great endeavour worthy of a great country: proud because we have a health service focused on 21st century needs.

A NHS that is available to all and personal to each means meeting another challenge of the future: offering, for the first time, every patient with a long term condition their own care plan.

But alongside new patient responsibilities will be new rights. And because we know that almost every British family has been touched by cancer, Alan Johnson and I know we must do more to relieve the financial worry that so often goes alongside the heartache. And so I can announce today for those in our nation battling cancer from next year you will not pay prescription charges.

And this is not the limit of our commitment to a fair NHS in a fair society. As over the next few years the NHS generates cash savings in its drugs budget we will plough savings back into abolishing charges for all patients with long-term conditions. That's the fairness patients want and the fairness every Labour party member will go out and fight for.

And in a fair society the fact that older people are living longer should be a blessing for their families not a burden. We are committed to linking pensions to earnings. And I am proud that we will now be implementing for the first time equality for women in their retirement.

No-one should live in fear of their old age because they worry their social care will impose financial burdens they could never afford to face and that the minute they need care puts the family home at risk.

The generation that rebuilt Britain from the ashes of the war deserves better and so I can tell you today that Alan Johnson and I will also bring forward new plans to help people to stay longer in their own homes and provide greater protection against the costs of care - dignity and hope for everyone in their later years.

That's the fairness older people deserve - and the fairness every Labour party member will go out and fight for.

So when people say in these tough times there's nothing we can do, there's nothing higher to aim for, no great causes left worth fighting for, my reply is our ideas are the ideas that will realise the hopes of families for a better future. Providing free nursery care for more children who need it is a cause worth fighting for.

Providing better social care for older people who need it is a cause worth fighting for. Delivering excellence in every single school is a cause worth fighting for. Universal check-ups and new help to fight cancer - these are all causes worth fighting for. This is the future we're fighting for.

And in this world of vast economic and social change, new opportunity for all must be matched with a new responsibility from all. Our aim is a something for something, nothing for nothing Britain. A Britain of fair chances for all, and fair rules applied to all.

So our policy is that everyone who can work, must work. That's why James Purnell has introduced reforms so that apart from genuine cases of illness, the dole is only for those looking for work or actively preparing for it. That's only fair to the people pulling their weight.

And let me be clear about the new Labour policy on crime; taking action on the causes of crime will never mean indulging those who perpetrate it. Fairness demands that we both punish and prevent.

Jacqui Smith and Jack Straw are introducing a landmark reform in our justice system - to put victims first. In consultation with victim support we will create an independent commissioner who will stand up for victims, witnesses and families - the people the courts and police exist to serve. And Damilola Taylor's father Richard is with us here today.

He's an inspiring example of the determination to see some good come out of personal tragedy. Last weekend he led thousands on a march through our capital, sending a united message. We will take the knives off our streets.

And justice seen is justice done - so you will be seeing more neighbourhood policing on the street, hearing more about the verdicts of the court, able to see the people who offended doing community payback which will be what it says; hard work for the public benefit at the places and times the public can see it. That's only fair to the law abiding majority.

Nobody in Britain should get to take more out of the system than they are willing to put in. I am proud that Britain will honour our obligations to provide refuge from persecution. And we recognise the contribution that migrants make to our economy and our society, but the other side of welcoming newcomers who can help Britain is being tough about excluding those adults who won't and can't. That's why we have introduced the Australian-style points-based system, the citizenship test, the English language test and we will introduce a migrant charge for public services.

That's only fair to the public who play by the rules and to the new citizens who uphold the rules.

So across the board, we will create rules that reward those who play by them and punish those who don't. That's what fairness means to me.

You know our party so often in its history has been home to the big ideas - ideas later taken for granted, but revolutionary in their time. Just think, the vote for working men, and then for women, the NHS, legal protection from race or sex discrimination. These are no longer just Labour policies, they are established British values - they are the common sense of our age.

And we should never forget one thing - that every single blow we have struck for fairness and for the future has been opposed by the Conservatives.

And just think where our country would be if we'd listened to them. No paternity leave, no New Deal, no Bank of England independence, no Sure Start, no devolution, no civil partnerships, no minimum wage, no new investment in the NHS, no new nurses, no new police, no new schools.

And so let's hear no more from the Conservatives - we did fix the roof while the sun was shining.

And just think if we'd taken their advice on the global financial crisis. Their policy was to let Northern Rock fold and imperil the whole financial system, our Labour government saved Northern Rock so not a single UK depositor lost out.

Their policy said, in this week of all weeks, that speculative short selling should continue. We acted decisively to end reckless speculation.

And the conservative policy would mean that at this very moment, there would be no regulation at all to protect homeowners. We are the party of protecting of homeowners rights.

Do you know what their Shadow Chancellor really said? In the week that banks were collapsing the man who wants to run our economy not only said: this is not a problem caused by the financial markets but went on to say and, I quote, that it's "a function of financial markets" that people make "loads of money out of the misery of others".

Just imagine where we'd be if they'd been in a position to implement their beliefs - no rescue of Northern Rock, no action on speculation, no protection for mortgages, doing nothing to stop banks going under.

What has become clear is that Britain cannot trust the Conservatives to run the economy.

Everyone knows that I'm all in favour of apprenticeships, but let me tell you this is no time for a novice.

But I believe in giving credit where it's due. The Conservative leader's team are smart - they've got a plan, and they are implementing it ruthlessly.

Their strategy is to change their appearance, to give the appearance of change, and to conceal what they really think.

And when salesmen won't tell you what they are selling, it's because they are selling something no-one should buy.

But I'm a man for detail and I've discovered some clues about what would be in store in a Conservative Britain.

They want us to believe that, like us, they now care about public services. But when Mr Cameron actually talks to his party about their spending plans he says the difference between Labour and Tory levels of public investment will be "dramatic" and "fundamental".

They want to tell us we're all progressives now but the day that Hazel Blears and Caroline Flint were announcing a one billion pound package to support millions of homeowners, the Conservatives were confirming that their first tax priority is to take that one billion pounds from hard working families and hand it over to the 3,000 richest estates in Britain.

And they want to tell us they now believe in investing in education, but they are committed to slashing 4.5 billion from the schools building programme, axing the educational maintenance allowances that help poorer students stay on and opposing the raising the education leaving age to eighteen and stopping training programmes. And yes friends, they would even take away Sure Start from infants and their parents. One of our greatest gifts to the future - one of the first priorities for Tory cuts.

The Conservatives may want to represent the future, but whether its Europe or energy, planning or tax credits, university places or 42 days, whenever they are tested on substance they have nothing to offer to meet the big challenges of tomorrow, because they are prisoners of their past.

If you look beneath the surface, you'll see that the Conservatives might have changed their tune, but they haven't changed their minds.

The Conservatives say our country is broken - but this country has never been broken by anyone or anything. This country wasn't broken by fascism, by the cold war, by terrorists.

Of course there are problems, but this is a country being lifted up every day by the people who love it.

We've got 4 million people helping neighbourhood watch, 6 million sports volunteers and over 5 million people doing amazing work as carers.

And just as we celebrated our national triumph when we won the 2012 games for London, so too were Andy Burnham, Tessa Jowell and I, along with all of you, filled with pride this summer as our Olympic and Paralympics heroes showed British brilliance at its best.

That's why for all the challenges, I don't believe Britain is broken - I think it's the best country in the world. I believe in Britain.

And stronger together as England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland we can make our United Kingdom even better.

And ours is a country full of heroes.

And we pay special tribute to the heroism of our armed forces, as Des Browne said yesterday - to their service and sacrifice in Iraq and in Afghanistan and in peacekeeping missions around the globe. Quite simply the best armed forces in the world.

The whole lesson of the new world I described earlier is that we must work together to meet the great shared challenges vital to our future.

And unlike the Conservatives who are extremists and isolationists on Europe, we will work with our partners in the European Union and we will work with America not just to deal with the immediate security challenges in Georgia and in Iran.

And I tell you that what we do together for the poor and vulnerable is an act of compassion, but it is more than that. It is what will determine whether this new global society succeeds or fails.

And David Miliband, Douglas Alexander and I will do everything in our power to bring justice and democracy, to Burma, to Zimbabwe and to Darfur.

And I promise you I will work with other countries to bring a permanent settlement - a secure Israel and a viable Palestine - to deliver peace for the people of the Middle East.

And this week at Britain's request the United Nations has summoned the leaders of the world to a special summit on what we know is a global poverty emergency.

You know, in the museum in Rwanda which commemorates the millions who lost their lives as the world looked the other way, there is a picture of a young boy called David - a ten year old who was tortured to death. His last words were "don't worry - the United Nations will come for us".

But we never did. That child believed the best of us only to discover that the pieties repeated so often meant in reality nothing at all. The words "never again" became just a slogan and not what it should be - the crucible in which are values are tested. I tell you, this Labour government will not allow the world to stand by as more than 20,000 children die today from diseases we know how to cure. We will not pass by as 100 million men, women and children face a winter of starvation.

So the poor will not go unheard tomorrow at the United Nations, because we the British people will speak up for them and for justice.

The fair society. Fairness at home. Fairness in the world - that's the new settlement for new times.

I know what I believe.

I know who I am.

I know what I want to do in this job.

And I know that the way to deal with tough times is to face them down.

Stay true to your beliefs.

Understand that all the attacks, all the polls, all the headlines, all the criticism, it's all worth it, if in doing this job I make life better for one child, one family, one community.

Because this job is not about me, it's about you.

And I'll tell you what else I've learned - that tough times don't weaken the determination of people who believe in what they're doing but strengthen our resolve.

You know when I talk to the people who do the tough jobs - nurses, teachers, police officers, soldiers, carers - about why they do what they do, so often they say to me "because I want to make a difference".

And doesn't each of us want to say of ourselves:

That I helped someone in need.

That I come to the aid of a neighbour in distress.

That I will not pass by on the other side.

That I will give of myself for something bigger than myself.

And each of us can make a contribution - but together we are even more than that.

United we are a great movement led by hopes not fears, gathered person by person - one individual, and then a few more, then hundreds, then thousands, then finally millions strong, a movement where I want each of us to say to each other:

This is our country, Britain. We are building it together, together we are making it greater;

Together we are building the fair society in this place and in this generation.

The mission of our times- the fair society, the cause that drives us on - and we will win, not for the sake of our party, together we will win for the future of our country.

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