

## Angela Rayner's Closing Conference Speech

Wednesday 28 September 2022 / 12:40 PM

Thank you, Conference, and thank you Svetlana.

The sacrifice you have made for your country sets an example to us all.

A woman, a mother who has led a movement, not for personal ambition but to free her country and her people.

The Labour Party stands with you, and a Labour government will too.

Conference, it's a great honour to make the closing speech before our traditional anthems.

To close the week just as John Prescott did back in the day.

Although I look better in a dress.

I hope to do him proud.

I love the traditions of our movement.

From Durham Miners' Gala to the Tolpuddle Martyrs' Festival.

But there is one part of our history that I will never celebrate – losing elections.

Think how it will feel meeting here in this hall in a few years' time after a term of a Labour government.

Back in power.

Now, this is the Labour Party.

I've no doubt we'll also be discussing how much further we'd like to go.

Once we've debated the CAC report for twenty minutes, of course.

But when the Tories deliver 1% of what they promised, they talk endlessly about that 1% and we never hear about the list of broken promises.

When we deliver 99% of what we promised, we talk endlessly about the 1% we didn't instead.

Just think about the historic Labour Governments and their legacy.

They didn't please all of our movement all of the time, including me.

But those Labour Governments made history.

The NHS.

Social security.

The welfare state.

Council housing.

Modern higher education.

The Open University.

Decriminalising homosexuality.

Outlawing racial discrimination.

Introducing equal pay.

The National Minimum Wage.

Sure Start.

The Good Friday Agreement.

Civil Partnerships.

The Equality Act.

The Human Rights Act.

The world's first Climate Change Act.

Conference, if we're not proud of ourselves, don't expect anyone else to do it for us.

And just think what that future Party Conference could have to celebrate.

We've shown this week how different we'll be.

Not just in our vision but with our plan for Britain.

Starting with the biggest challenge facing not just our country but the world.

We will tackle the climate crisis head on.

We will protect our people and our planet.

And we will pull out all the stops to build a fairer and greener Britain.

As Keir set out yesterday through our Green Prosperity Plan.

We will unleash a green industrial revolution.

By reaching 100 per cent clean power by 2030, we will save £93 billion off energy bills.

And through Great British Energy we will give British power right back to British people.

I said on Sunday that a moment of choice is upon us.

A moment to show the country that we are ready to govern.

Well, Conference, I know I'm a bit biased, but, boy, do I think that we've shown that.

It isn't just that we have better policies, although we do.

It isn't just that we will be a more competent government, although we will.

No, it is that our values differ fundamentally.

And our policies are not better despite our values but because of them.

Labour values.

The country's values too.

Yet too often when it comes to elections, people feel they have a choice of heart versus head.

Values or competence.

I say to those watching at home – this week we have shown it's a choice you will never have to make again.

And this past week, the Tories have shown it too.

The Conservative Party are no longer pretending to be competent and stable.

Today's Tories will plunge us into chaos in pursuit of their dogma.

Divide the country to rule it and regards rules as for you, and not for them.

Tough on crime?

They brought crime to Number 10

Defenders of the free market?

The market's in free fall.

England's green and pleasant land?

Frack it.

From the party of stability to causing earthquakes.

From the party of business, to a slap down from the IMF.

From the party of serious government to the party of parties.

Liz Truss has even crashed the pork market.

Now...that. Is. A. Disgrace.

You'd think that snouts in the trough was the one thing they could manage.

When interest rates were low and borrowing was cheap, they sacrificed public services for austerity.

Now they're borrowing just as interest rates are soaring.

To think this was the party that claimed they were for sound money.

That's WHAT one high-flying new Tory MP certainly thought in 2012.

He wrote a pamphlet demanding a balanced budget every year.

He said "Fiscal prudence is the very least we should expect from a Chancellor."

And if they failed, they should face a 20% pay cut.

That Tory MP must be absolutely furious with the new Tory Chancellor, except he is the new Tory Chancellor.

I've got a funny feeling he won't be taking that pay cut either.

Pay cuts are for other people.

He won't even let the budget watchdog tell him just how much of our money he's handing over to the super rich.

They used to say the Tories knew the value of nothing but the cost of everything.

Now they don't even know that.

The next election won't be a choice between a strong economy or a fair society.

We don't have to choose one or the other.

Because you can't have one without the other.

An unequal economy is an inefficient one.

It's perhaps the starkest difference between us and the Tories.

Never again can we let them pretend they are the patriotic party.

I love my country.

That's why I want so much better for it.

But the Tories now think our biggest economic problem, is you.

The working people of Britain.

And while they think you are our country's greatest weakness, we know that you are our greatest strength.

It's why Rachel and I will make the minimum wage, a real living wage.

Because we are not just the party of higher growth but of higher wages.

We know what the Tories think.

The new Prime Minister and her Chancellor have said it out loud.

The problem is that British workers are idlers not grafters.

The irony.

From this lot!!

Liz Truss said she doesn't like hand-outs.

Then handed £150 billion to the energy giants.

They believe in hand-outs alright.

It's the same with her other top priority – unlimited bankers' bonuses.

It's the same old ideology.

You incentivise the richest by giving them more money.

You incentivise the rest of us by taking it away.

Conference, it hasn't worked before and it won't wash now.

I know they'd rather forget it, but we're now twelve years into Tory government.

Even if we are on our fourth Prime Minister.

Where are they now?

David Cameron.

The privatised Prime Minister, sold to Green-sill.

What was his greatest achievement?

Fooling the Lib Dems?

Not exactly a high bar.

If you just care about power for powers' sake and have no principles, no policies and no plan, you end up with a pointless premiership.

Remembered only as a pub quiz answer.

Then we had Theresa May.

I remember her telling us that if you were a citizen of the world, you were a citizen of nowhere.

If only we'd known about their green cards and tax loopholes.

Their politicians are becoming like their donors – residents of everywhere, taxpayers of nowhere.

Then there's Boris Johnson.

I do owe him one apology.

I said he couldn't organise a booze up in a brewery.

Turns out he could organise a booze up pretty much anywhere.

Just a shame he couldn't organise anything else.

We're a party with a serious plan.

He had a plan for a serious party.



I'll miss one thing though.

As inflation ran out of control, at least his jokes were one thing that got cheaper every week.

But the real problem wasn't that his jokes were so cheap.

It was that his mistakes were so expensive.

He ended his time claiming he was forced from office by the 'deep state'.

The only deep state that forced him from office was the one he left our country in.

Sorry Conference, I had to use all my Boris lines now, while we still remember who he is.

Before he becomes a footnote of failure in the history books.

Or at least that's what the new Prime Minister must be hoping for.

Because I think he'll be sat on the backbenches plotting his come back, with a glint in his eye, thinking I wasn't so bad after all...was I!

And what a sorry state of affairs that is.

What does Liz Truss have to say after a decade in government?

Apparently they were wrong all along.

She's now asking for seven years to fix it.

Yet offering us even more of the ideology that caused the problems in the first place.

She doesn't just think that we're lazy.

She must think we're stupid as well.

And that brings me to this new government.

Openly chosen for loyalty not ability.

A ministry of all the talent-LESS.

Frankly when I looked at the benches opposite last week, I thought the clowns had escaped the circus.

Not so much a flying circus as a lying circus.

My new opposite number.

Her first act was to get to grips with the real crisis in our NHS.

The spread of a new and dangerous contagion.

Not the Omicron variant.

The Oxford comma.

That's a comma before the word 'and', in case you were wondering.

Something like this sentence.

GPs are overwhelmed, ambulances not turning up, beds are full, waiting times are rocketing, the NHS is starved of investment and, it's all the fault of Tory decisions.

It will take a Labour government to put that right.

So, here's another sentence that Therese Coffey won't like.

A Labour government will double the number of district nurses, train 5,000 new health visitors, create 10,000 nursing placements, double the number of medical students, and we will pay for it by reversing your handout to the wealthiest few.

I like every dot and comma of that policy, Conference.

And what a contrast to the government you've seen this week, Conference.

Yesterday the country saw the Keir that I know and see every day.

Announcing 100 per cent clean power by 2030, driven by a British energy company owned by the British people for the British people.

He showed the real leadership this country needs.

And on Monday Rachel showed how Labour would govern with competence, class and care.

With her as the UK's first-ever female Chancellor, setting out our National Wealth Fund to give the British public a share of the wealth they create.

And a genuine living wage that matches the cost of living.

And I thank my own front bench team – Fleur, Rachel, Justin, Imran and Flo – for all that they do.

We have set out our five-point National Procurement Plan to tackle waste, sleaze, and lies.

And unleash the power of public spending.

Our Fair Work Standard to raise working conditions across the economy.

Alongside our New Deal for Working People.

And we haven't stopped there.

Our whole Shadow Cabinet has shown we are a team with a plan.

70% home ownership, our renters' charter and a clamp down on buy-to-let.

Council housing, council housing, council housing.

The Hillsborough Law, a domestic abuse register and a new football regulator.

Sewage sanctions, Job Centre reform and a transformational industrial strategy.

Insulation, innovation, inspiration,

All in one.

13,000 more police officers to keep our communities safe.

New Navy ships built by unionised workers in British shipyards.

Closing the tax break for private schools, to fund education for all.

Free school breakfasts for children.

New bus services in public hands.

And as contracts expire, restoring public ownership of the railways.

Conference, our Shadow Cabinet has shown what a Labour Government will be radical, responsible, realistic.

But delivering this message would be impossible without all of you.

Our brilliant activists who campaign through rain and wind.

And that's just outside this building.

If you ever needed proof that on shore wind can deliver!

I have too many people to thank but I want to mention our brilliant chair, Alice Perry standing down from the NEC.

And Diana Holland who is stepping down as Party Treasurer after 12 years.

We all have a debt of gratitude to you.

Finally, thank you Liverpool for hosting our Conference.

While the Tories dare not show their face here – you've shown us the warmth and pride that defines this city.

Conference, this week we have shown how together we will transform this country.

And the depth of talent across our party.

And we have come together to honour our history as only Labour can.

Be in no doubt, the times ahead are going to be tough,

Now, let's rise to the moment and deliver for the working people of Britain.

Let's build a Fairer, Greener Future,

With a Labour Government in power once again.