

In 1979 a first time voter walked into a polling station and cast his vote for a Conservative Party that offered change and reform. Change from the the dark days of 3 day weeks, strikes and power cuts and the promise to get Britain working again.

That landslide Government led by Margaret Thatcher proceeded to impose savage cuts across our public sector, waged war on the unions, undermined and devastated local Government and the resulting mass unemployment wrecked not just lives but whole communities.

I was that first time voter, I was appalled at what followed that election result and I don't want to see that again.

We must not see that again.

But the Tories are back at it again. They claim to offer change. They claim that by cutting taxes for millionaires and cutting waste they will halve the budget deficit and somehow increase spending on the NHS. It just doesn't add up and that's what scares me about the Tories. They are not being honest with the British people. Put simply they either have to raise taxes or cut public services. Probably both. But they just won't say.

In the most crucial election for decades, the closest election for decades at a time when public faith and confidence in politics and parliament is at an all time low. It is utterly disgraceful that the Conservative party are engaged in the biggest con trick of all. It's bad enough that the British people have had to endure decades of broken promises, now they are being bullied and frightened into believing the Conservative party has changed and that they and they alone have the answers. That they and they alone will somehow be the party to protect public services at this time of crisis.

The Conservative don't offer change, they offer an alternative that will jeopardise the delicate climb out of recession, they offer tax cuts for the rich, and they offer uncertainty, fear and anxiety for anyone reliant on the public sector.

And Labour, Labour are struggling in this election, and for good reason.

It's now clear for all to see that the house of Labour is built on foundations of debt. Their promises were financed through increased public spending and borrowing. They failed to regulate the banks and they encouraged the borrow and spend society.

They stood back and let people borrow more and more on rates that were unsustainable and when people like Vince Cable and the Lib Dems warned they shrugged us off and ignored us. Well they're not ignoring us now. But in the meantime how many lives were ruined by debt.

Labour has been running the country on the never never.

And if we hadn't had the banking collapse it probably would still be doing so.

What is the point of Labour anymore. They are bankrupt of ideas, but they think they still know best. They failed to close the gap between rich and poor. They failed miserably to tackle child poverty. There is a generation of young unemployed desperate for hope and a growing underclass of people increasingly disconnected from society.

They have betrayed the very people that they were founded to fight for.

The Lib Dems agree that we do need to cut the deficit by half, but we also need to protect key frontline services it's not just about cuts its about priorities. Ours are to protect key public services, enhance and improve key public services and yes, cut waste.

Now, I think it is clear to all that this election is like no other in living memory. Things are changing in Britain, after virtually 65 years of unbroken tory/labour rule people are saying enough is enough. People want real change, fundamental change for a fairer society where as individuals we are all valued , we are all encouraged and nurtured.

Change that brings fairer taxes like our proposal to increase the basic tax allowance to £10,000 putting up to £700 in your pocket, taking over 3m low earners and pensioners out of tax altogether.

A fair chance for every child, cutting class sizes, extra funds to schools to help struggling children.

And yes a fair deal in our democracy and Government – we have to clean up politics once and for all. The power for the people to sack their MP's and yes, fair votes.

We must end the scandal that means over the past 40 years nearly half of our constituencies have only been represented by one party.

There is a tremendous opportunity for change before us. People are turning away from the old parties.

This is the time.

The time for new beginnings, a fresh start, new hope. Only the Lib Dems can deliver the changes needed, for business, our children, our society our democracy and government.

So on May 6th the British people now have a real choice for once. To continue with Labour/Conservative pendulum politics – the politics of the past. Or reform, hope, change – change that works for you.

Vote Liberal Democrat on Thursday and change Britain for good.