

In this extract from his keynote speech the Labour leader Ed Miliband talks about his experiences during the 2013 local election campaign.

Source:

<http://labourlist.org/2013/09/transcript-ed-milibands-2013-conference-speech/>
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Ed Miliband

Speech to the Labour Party Annual Conference

And I talked to people about their lives. I remember this town meeting I had in Cleveleys. It was just coming to the end of the meeting and this bloke wandered up. He was incredibly angry. It's a family show so I won't exactly repeat what he said. He was so angry he wouldn't give me his name, but he did tell me his story about how he spent the last ten 5 years looking after his disabled wife, and then another four years looking for a job and not finding one. He was angry about immigration and some people in the crowd booed him. But actually he wasn't prejudiced, he just felt the economy didn't work for him. And then I think about the two market traders I met in Chesterfield, standing by their stalls, out in all weathers, working all hours, and they said look this country just doesn't seem to be 10 rewarding our hard work and effort. There seem to be some people getting something for nothing. This society is losing touch with our values. [...]

And then I think about this scaffolder I met just around the corner from where I live. I was just coming back from a local café I'd been at. He stopped me in the street, he said to me, "Where's your bodyguard?" I said I don't have one, but that's another story. He told me 15 his story. And what he said to me was "look, I go out, I do the work, I go all around the country, again out in all weathers, I earn a decent wage, but I still can't make ends meet". And he said to me, "Is anyone ever going to do anything about those gas and electric bills that just go up and up, faster than I can earn a living?" He wanted someone to fight for him.

Now if you listen to these stories – four of millions of the stories of our country – and you have 20 your own, and your friends and family, what do you learn? All of these people love Britain, they embody its great spirit, but they all believe that Britain can do better than this. Today I say to them and millions of others you're right, Britain can do better than this, Britain must do better than this, Britain will do better than this with a government that fights for you.

Annotation:

¹ Cleveleys,

⁸ Chesterfield – towns in England