



Geoffrey Van Orden's **eDispatch**

From Brussels

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 **Conservatives**



"I didn't become an MEP in order to promote the EU - I want us to govern our own country. I go to Brussels to speak up for British interests and for the people of the East of England. My priorities are the prosperity and security of the United Kingdom." Geoffrey Van Orden MBE MEP

THE FUTURE OF OUR COUNTRY IS AT STAKE

We are just a few days from the General Election. The decision you take on May 7 will be critical to the long-term prosperity and security of our country. There is only one question that people need to ask themselves: **"Would I rather David Cameron or Ed Miliband was my Prime Minister?"**

No one else will be occupying No10.

With Cameron you will get **strong economic growth** providing more and better jobs and the basis for good schools, an efficient NHS, and strong defence, as well as controlled immigration and a vote on Europe. With Miliband it will be **higher taxes, profligate public spending to appease the public sector Unions**, a busted economy, uncontrolled immigration (remember -it was Labour that let 3 million people into our country), no EU reform and no say on our EU membership.

IF I WAS LABOUR AND UKIP DIDN'T EXIST, I'D INVENT THEM

A vote for UKIP will just let Labour in. Some people - cross about some particular aspect of the Coalition Government's policies - still seem to imagine that voting UKIP might serve a useful purpose. But just remember - **UKIP will have no power to do anything.** They might win 2 seats. That's all. They won't be tipping any balance. They won't be some crucial element in a new coalition. **All they will do is reduce the Conservative vote in key marginal constituencies around our coastline, and let Labour in.** I know UKIP at first hand. **We Tories don't need lessons from them in standing up for our country.** Unless there is just blind anger, the response on the doorstep soon becomes positive. The UKIP waverer often wants reassurance. We can give it.

IMMIGRATION

In the past two weeks I have campaigned in over a dozen constituencies across the East of England. I have consciously focused on the more marginal seats as that is where UKIP is potentially most damaging. I have been knocking on doors to answer the questions of constituents, to discuss with them the facts of political life and of the very positive achievements of Conservative Ministers - not least getting the economy back on course.

People are concerned about immigration. So am I. So is David Cameron. That's why we have already closed so many of the loopholes in our system - shutting down bogus colleges; excluding sham marriages; introducing English language tests; reimposing entry and exit controls on our borders. And, to deal with the issue of EU migration, it is why we have already made changes to our benefits system - a magnet for many migrants - and why we shall negotiate changes to the EU's "free movement" rules. No one else will do it.

Yes, it's been more difficult than we imagined and has taken longer than we thought. And there is much, much more to be done. But **Conservatives are doing it. No one else will.** We are still committed to getting immigration down to the tens of thousands and this will take even more effort in the next Parliament. Labour have no interest in this - on the contrary, they think they are importing voters. **UKIP has no power to do anything - nor will it have.** Conservatives have taken action, know what needs to be done, and will do the job, difficult as it may be.

THE ECONOMY IS THE KEY

The key election issue is the economy. Conservatives have been enormously successful in turning the economy round. Labour crashed the car. Why would anyone in their right mind give them the keys again? Surely memories can't be that short.

After five difficult years, the UK now has the fastest economic growth in the Western world. A sound economy is the basis for just about everything else you want achieved. We have more people in employment now than ever in our history. The impact of the turnaround is beginning to be felt - strong business confidence, greater job security and rising wages.

Last Friday I was with the Prime Minister in Frinton when he made an impassioned case for a Conservative Government. He set out **Conservative achievements in the East of England over the past 5 years, reversing Labour's record of unemployment and business collapse, pointing to the 200,000 additional jobs in the region, 80,000 more businesses, over 200,000 apprenticeships, £950 a year increase in the state pension, and a cut in income tax for 2.6 million people.**

THERE IS A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONSERVATIVES AND LABOUR

Some say it doesn't matter who is in office these days as there is no longer a big political fault-line and the main parties have become so similar. [I disagree totally with this view.](#)

On the one hand we have a Labour Party that not only bears direct responsibility for most of the ills we now suffer but believes in higher taxation, the big State, wasteful spending of money we don't have, socialist education principles, mass immigration, and a federal Europe. On the other hand we have a Conservative Party determined to restore our economy and create jobs, end the welfare dependency culture, restore standards in schools, control immigration and reform our relationship with Europe. The choice is between Cameron and Miliband. Farage isn't in the frame.

What about the SNP? With the confident expectation of winning over 35 seats in Scotland, **the SNP could be in the position of propping up a Miliband government, if UKIP has managed to inflict sufficient damage on the Tories.** Forgetting the tartan bit, the SNP is an extreme left-wing party - and it has the sworn aim of breaking up our country and removing a vital element of our national defences.

TRIDENT

I fear for the long-term security, independence and global status of the UK should the SNP achieve its misguided aim of unilateral nuclear disarmament. The proposed renewal of our nuclear submarine fleet represents a tiny proportion of the annual defence budget (less than 3%) - in fact, equivalent to the current rate of benefit fraud, or just a few days' worth of NHS expenditure - and in return we have an insurance policy against a whole range of future threats: we will not be open to ransom by rogue nuclear states, we will not be leaving France as Europe's sole nuclear power, and we shall continue to be an influential ally of the United States and sit at the top table of world powers. To say that Trident isn't much good at defeating terrorists misses the point entirely - rather like saying armed police aren't much use for dealing with shop-lifters or domestic violence.

TIME TO GET REAL

The decisions we take in the next few years will affect the lives of our children and grand-children. Do we seriously think that their fate should be put in the hands of UKIP and the SNP? Wouldn't you agree with me that it's time to put an end to petty carping and focus on the big picture? Please get out and talk to your family, and to your friends and neighbours. And encourage them to become active in supporting their Conservative candidate. **Their future - and the future of our country - is at stake. It will be too late on May 8th.**

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