

The Alternative Queen's Speech

Cabinet Office

Crown Employment (Nationality) Bill

To ensure that the most suitable applicants can hold office within the civil service and to remove outdated restrictions. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- remove general restrictions on nationality which apply to persons employed or holding office in any civil capacity under the Crown

Department for Communities & Local Government

Equalities Bill

This Bill will close a number of loopholes in existing equalities legislation. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Equal provision of goods and services to LGBT
- Remove exemptions on faith schools re: religion of employees
- Mandatory equality pay audits in all large organisations
- Amend the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 so as not to discriminate on the basis of age.

Housing Bill

The UK housing market is failing to meet the housing needs of the UK population, as is evident by lengthening council waiting lists, the increased number of families living in temporary accommodation, and the inability of young people to get into the property marketplace. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Allow councils to directly invest in council housing (the 'fourth option')
- Make it an obligation upon all councils, RSLs and private landlords to meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2012
- Restore statutory right to housing for homeless
- Restore rent controls and fair rent tribunals
- Reduce number of UK homes owned per person to two
- Tougher energy efficiency regulations in all new build housing

Local Government Bill

Local government is an important part of UK democracy, and as such should be the vehicle through which local communities determine their local environment. This Bill will give greater powers and freedoms to local authorities to act in the interests of their communities. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Give councils a general power to provide whatever services the local community decides

- restore to councils the ability to set council tax and business rates at local level and determine other income sources
- Allow councils to regulate bus services
- Right to borrow and establish community bond schemes
- Abolish rate-capping and restore control of business rates to local authorities
- Right to establish restorative justice schemes with approval from the Home Secretary

Department for Constitutional Affairs

Constitutional Affairs Bill

This Bill addresses a number of constitutional anomalies to enhance UK democracy. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Abolish Royal Prerogative (including parliamentary approval for armed conflict, and for the signing of treaties)
- Reduce the voting age to 16
- Further devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Make all Statutory Instruments subject to affirmative resolution of both Houses of Parliament
- Cap party election expenditure

Department of Culture, Media & Sport

Media Regulation Bill

The UK media is controlled by a decreasing number of wealthy individuals. This Bill will ensure that the media is regulated by the state and the public in order to provide quality and reliable information to the public. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Staff and readers' representatives on the editorial boards of all national newspapers
- Limiting concentration of media ownership: no national newspaper proprietor shall be permitted to own more than one daily and one Sunday newspaper
- Obligation for media enterprises to disclose the full extent of their global holdings in each of the countries in which they operate
- Power to divest existing media properties where there are unacceptable levels of concentration
- Strengthen public service broadcasting and regional media commitments for terrestrial channels
- Government support for readers to buy stake in their newspapers: readers' direct akin to Supporters' Direct in football
- Statutory right of reply where false or slanderous information is provided by the media

Department for Education & Skills

Education for All Bill

The compulsory education system in the UK has a vital role to play in educating and socialising young people. Therefore it should not divide young people along ethnic or religious lines. The education system is also failing less academically gifted children and will therefore make the necessary reforms to implement the recommendations of the Tomlinson Report, and to abolish fees and restore grants to promote higher education among those from the most deprived backgrounds. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Increase universal free nursery education from 12.5 to 20 hours per week for 3-5 year olds, over the course of a Parliament, and commit to year on year increases thereafter until UK at EU average
- Abolition of all selection in primary and secondary education
- Abolition of Trust and City Academy schools
- Restructure LEAs so that they are co-governed by a local management board of parents, teachers, pupils and local councillors
- All new schools to be non-faith, all existing schools to have 25% intake outside affiliated faith
- Abolition of league tables
- Remove charitable status from fee-charging schools
- Restoration of public sector Careers Service
- Implement Tomlinson report into post-16 education
- Abolish tuition fees and restore student grants

Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

Climate Change Bill

Climate change is one of the most serious issues facing this country. This Bill will set clear targets for Government so that the UK can be a global leader in environmental technologies and in carbon reductions. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Year on year cuts in carbon emissions equivalent to 3% annually
- Establish sectoral reduction targets for industry
- Energy efficiency targets for all new buildings and vehicles
- Subsidies for renewable and micro energy generation
- Targets for increases in renewable energy sources in electricity generation and in transport

Rural Affairs Bill

This Bill will promote incentives and legislation to improve the environmental standards of UK farming, to improve food quality, and to improve the conditions for farmed animals in the UK. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Extra subsidies for organic farming
- Year on year increase in organic farming
- Green tax on non-organic pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, etc

- Ban on snares for trapping animals
- Limit live animal transport to 8 hour journeys
- Subsidies for farmers of dual-purpose breed cattle herds
- Ban battery farming of hens in UK by 2010 (two years ahead of EU ban)

Foreign & Commonwealth Office

European Union Bill

The UK Government will work within the EU to negotiate improved democratic procedures, but this Bill will ensure that there is democratic oversight of all EU directives being passed into UK law. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- All EU directives to be approved by both Houses of Parliament before becoming UK law and by N.Irish, Scottish and Welsh parliaments where relevant

Department of Health

NHS Reform Bill

This Bill will replace foundation hospitals with local management boards to improve local input into healthcare, centralise contract management and procurement (making sizeable efficiencies) and devolve power to democratic local management boards. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Returning of all cleaning and catering contracts in-house
- Abolition of foundation status and practice-based commissioning
- Establishment of democratic local management boards – comprised of NHS staff, patients' groups, and local and national government representatives
- Return NHS logistics to the public sector

Home Office

Asylum Bill

The UK should be a safe haven for those fleeing persecution. The amendments in this Bill will ensure that asylum seekers are not criminalised upon entry to the UK. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Restore the right of asylum seekers to appeal in the UK courts
- All benefits to be received in cash not through vouchers
- Lift the reservation to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Justice Bill

The role of the UK justice system is to protect UK citizens from both criminality and from undue interference from the State. This Bill seeks to

increase access to the law and to reduce state legal powers. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Abolition of control orders, ID cards, and other unnecessary anti-terror measures
- Renegotiate all extradition treaties to require *prima facie* evidence before UK citizens extradited and allow 'forum' to be determined in UK courts
- Restore right to protest around Parliament
- Increase legal aid and fund national network of community law centres
- Fully restore right of jury trial

Department for International Development

International Development Bill

This Bill will commit the UK Government to increasing the proportion of GDP spent on international development aid from its current 0.34% (2003) to 0.7% by 2012 and to 1% by 2018. It will also further ensure that the money is used effectively by removing privatisation conditionality, and if necessary removing UK aid from multilateral organisations where there is such conditionality or where aid is being given to regimes with severe human rights or environmental abuses. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Year on year increases towards 1% of GDP
- Allow the removal of UK aid from multilateral organisations that have privatisation conditionality or where that aid may harm human rights or further environment damage

Department of Trade & Industry

Arms Control and Conversion Bill

The UK is the largest arms exporter in Europe. This Bill seeks to ensure that this industry is not profiting from human rights abuses abroad or from weapons that may be used for torture. This Bill will give the UK some of the strongest arms control legislation in the world and will apply to all UK companies and their subsidiaries, and all UK citizens (even those operating abroad). The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Ban manufacture, sale and export of all weapons of torture, landmines and cluster bombs – and all components exported for the purpose of their construction
- Tougher licensing for export of small arms
- Ban manufacture, export and sale of all chemical, biological and nuclear weapons (including depleted uranium munitions) – and all components exported for the purpose of their construction
- Introduction of an approved list of countries for arms exports – to be approved by Parliament
- Establish a skills conversion agency to retrain workers in the arms industry

Companies Bill

To ensure that economic growth does not have unwanted social or environmental impacts, this Bill will ensure that companies are legally obliged to consider the social and environmental context in which they operate. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- The election of workers' representatives onto the boards of all publicly-listed companies
- All large and medium-sized public and private companies to be required to report on environmental and social issues, including of their suppliers
- Directors are legally obliged to minimise any damage their company does to local communities and the environment
- Allow people overseas who are harmed by the activities of a UK company to take action against them in a UK court
- Remove 'contributory negligence' from auditing companies and strengthen disclosure requirements to shareholders
- Restrict UK trading rights for companies based in offshore tax havens

Corporate Manslaughter Bill

The current Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Bill is a welcome step forward, but remains inadequate. This Bill would strengthen the legislation. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Identification of a 'responsible manager' rather than a 'senior manager'
- Link fines scale to company profit levels
- Penalty of corporate probation and director disqualification
- Statutory duty on directors for health and safety
- Establish secondary liability for those who conspire or collude in an act which results in death

Quality of Work Bill

To improve the working environment for UK citizens. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Greater rights to flexible working
- Make employment tribunal reinstatement orders legally enforceable
- Increase in NMW and improved enforcement
- Extra bank holiday per year
- Temporary workers receive full employment rights from day one

Trade Union Freedom Bill

Trade union rights were severely limited under the Conservative governments of Thatcher and Major. This Bill will seek to redress some of the current imbalances to strengthen the position of UK workers in the economy. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Abolition of restrictive balloting procedures in line with ILO convention 87
- Abolition of restrictive industrial action notice procedures

- Allow secondary action in some circumstances
- Right of Prison Officers to take industrial action
- Rebalancing of law on industrial action injunctions
- Automatic right to reinstatement for taking lawful industrial action
- Outlaw use of replacement labour to break strikes

Department for Transport

Aviation Bill

As part of the commitment to tackling climate change, this Bill will seek to limit the projected future growth of the aviation industry and to ensure that this industry pays a fair share of taxation. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Funding for research into alternative fuel technologies
- Tax on flight tickets
- Tax on aviation fuel
- Noise protection for communities near airports

Maritime Industry Bill

This Bill is to encourage growth within the UK maritime industry and to close loopholes in employment laws that can lead to the exploitation of workers on UK ships. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Employment link to the tonnage tax scheme
- Application of the Race Relations Act to seafarers
- National Minimum Wage to apply on all UK flagged ships

Railways Bill

The railways are a key focus for meeting UK environmental objectives by reducing road use and for increasing growth by improved transport links. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Following public ownership as franchises end, establishment of democratic railways board – one-third employees, one-third Government and one-third travelling public
- Introduction of a national discount railcard scheme
- New freight line - a dedicated lorries-on-trains service through the Channel Tunnel and the length of the UK
- Year on year increases in freight on rail

HM Treasury

Fair Taxation Bill

This Bill will rebalance the UK tax burden which is stifling creativity for many of the poorest citizens. This Bill will ensure that tax avoidance loopholes are closed, which it has been estimated cost the UK exchequer £100bn per year in lost tax revenues. New income tax rates will be introduced for the highest

earners while income tax will be cut for the poorest. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Close tax avoidance loopholes
- Increased powers of investigation for HMRC
- Income tax cuts and rises
- Green taxes for investment in alternative energy sources
- Abolition of student debt

Department for Work & Pensions

Pensions Bill

Security in old age is a basic right in the UK. This Bill will ensure greater financial security in old age and tackle pensioner poverty. The main proposals of the Bill are:

- Immediate restoration of link to earnings
- Up-rating of basic state pension to Pension Credit level
- Raise the single person pension above inflation until its value reaches 25% of average earnings
- Strengthen the S2P as a secure alternative to private pension schemes, that can be used by the Government for public investment and infrastructure projects.
- Establish a NI Board representing contributors and pensioners to monitor the state pension scheme's finances
- Citizenship-based pension scheme to tackle (especially female) pensioner poverty
- In all large and medium-sized organisations, same pension scheme for all employees (executives to lowest paid)
- Ban UK pension schemes from taking 'pension holidays' and ensure that any surplus is distributed as bonuses to pension scheme members

Welfare Benefits Up-rating Bill

The value of welfare benefits has depreciated in recent years. This Bill would link all benefit rates to average earnings, so that lone parents, children, the unemployed and those with incapacities do not fall further behind the rest of society. The main proposal of this Bill is

- To link all welfare benefits' up-rating to average earnings