



**ab'stem/ Verb - Formally decline to vote either for or against a proposal or motion.**

There is also another definition of this word: Abstain: Chicken out, being childish, throwing the dummy out of the cot.

That's exactly what Labour did on Monday 20 July. 184 Labour MP's abstained from voting against the Tories new Welfare reforms, if all 184 Labour MP's had voted the Welfare Reform and Work Bill would not have got through Parliament and thus the poverty stricken would've got some breathing space.

Buuuuut OH NO not on our shift said Harriet Harman, the poverty stricken can stay poverty stricken, although 48 Labour MP's rebelled against Party orders and voted against the bill, so they don't all have jelly for a backbone, but the Bill still passed the first stage 308 to 124. So if Labour hadn't sat on their hands and actually did what their supporters expect of them.....

As a point of order immediately after the vote SNP MP Pete Wishart said, "*Can we rearrange the furniture in this house so we (SNP) can become the official opposition whilst Labour can continue abstaining from the back benches*". Labour MP Diane Abbott Tweeted: "*Just voted against Tory welfare bill. Sorry for colleagues who knew it was wrong but abstained. We weren't sent to Parliament to abstain.*" and Conservative MP and chief secretary to the Treasury Greg Hands Tweeted: "*47 Labour rebels on welfare tonight. Huge. Biggest Labour rebellion for some time. Leadership crisis without actually having a Leader!*" (it was 48).

So its bye-bye to tax credits as we know them, with the new Welfare reforms Cameron and Osborne have basically done away with tax credits and not even a whimper from the supposed Party of the People, Labour the opposition. Who is the opposition now though?, it's certainly not Labour they are a broken party that intends to sit in the corner sulking whilst the world passes by, if it wasn't for the SNP 56 there would be NO opposition to the Tories assault on the poor.

The following day the Labour MP for Edinburgh South appeared on BBC Reporting Scotland claiming he voted against the bill. **He was lying** and the **BBC never did or said anything about it**. Then later the same day Labour abstained again, this time on something affecting Scotland. Did you know Scotlands emergency services pay VAT? The only emergency services in the UK to do so. The SNP put forward an amendment to have VAT removed from Scotlands Police and Fire services and Labour, our Scottish Labour MP Ian Murray included, abstained.

As it is the Labour MP's that are in parliament were put there by the electorate to vote on issues of importance, if they are not prepared to do that they should be sacked, they are not doing the job they were employed for.

This will probably be how it is for the next 5 years, SNP fighting FOR the people while Labour fight AGAINST the people. If they are sulking now they are really going to be in the huff when they see a repeat of the GE result in the 2016 Holyrood elections.

**EVEL – a very appropriate acronym** from the Conservative Party for English Votes for English Laws. It is almost as if they decided on the title of the Bill to describe themselves perfectly.

But really, why all the hullabaloo? Surely it is only fair that as Scotland and Wales have the means to vote on things that are exclusively affecting them, so should the English. However, that very same reasoning is why it cannot happen under the present administration. Scotland has its own Parliament in Holyrood, Wales has its assembly. Both of these were set up to give the respective countries a better say in their own affairs. HOWEVER there is NO English Parliament – no assembly tasked with looking after the affairs of the English. Like it or not, Westminster is the Parliament of the UNITED Kingdom – it legislates for everyone. There can be no ruling that some of the MPs are not allowed to vote on matters brought before it.

Remember that there are NO Scottish MPs, no Welsh MPs and indeed no English MPs. There are merely Members of the United Kingdom Parliament elected to represent their constituents' views on matters retained by Westminster. And in any case, even where a policy on the surface is only affecting England – e.g. spending cuts in the NHS – there is an impact on the devolved administrations. Cuts in public spending on the NHS in England affects the funding for the NHS in Scotland – so is it truly and English only matter? In fact, over the course of the last parliament (2010-15) 13 of 20 issues deemed English only affected Scotland, 13 issues that under EVEL our elected MPs would have no say on.

If England wants to have some matters reserved so that only MPs from English constituencies are able to vote on it, then they have to do it properly and lobby for an ENGLISH PARLIAMENT.

The fact that they think that they can exclude some of the democratically elected members of the current Parliament from voting just because they view it as an 'English matter' just serves to highlight the total arrogance that is the major reason for the push in Scotland to become independent. If our duly elected representatives are told that they cannot have a vote within the UK parliament then surely the logical conclusion is to dissolve the union and let ALL the countries look after their own affairs. It's not exactly rocket science now, is it??

**Remember if you read it or hear it, RESEARCH IT.**

Don't take the medias word for it, don't even take ours, go find the truth for yourselves that's what we did..

**David "Fluffy" Mundell the only Tory MP in Scotland opened a foodbank on Friday 24 July.** In Dumfries on Friday Fluffy turned up to open a new Trussell Trust Foodbank only to find approximately 150 protesters waiting to welcome him. However, he never spoke to them, he never even faced them, he sneaked in the back door and out the same way not long after.

The issues protesters have with Mundell opening a foodbank are plainly obvious, it's his Party that are responsible for the increase in demand of such places. Through Conservative mandated reductions in benefits and benefit sanctions more and more people, unemployed and working families alike, rely on foodbanks to feed themselves and their children.

Fluffy made a short statement to the press but refused to take questions or have his photo taken in the Food Parcel Prep room. He said "*I believe it is very important to have full, open discussions about issues, and I don't want to hide away from people's concerns, and I don't do that.*" Funny idea he has of what full and open discussion is when he slithered in and out the back door and refused to be questioned by the press, but that's the Tories for you, say one thing to make them appear nice then show their true colours the minute they stop talking. Ian Duncan Smith, the Devil incarnate, is one Tory who exemplifies what Conservatism is all about, saying "I welcome foodbanks".

Now excuse me for having a completely different opinion on foodbanks. I agree that they are a great thing and that unfortunately they are needed, however, it is scandalous that in a country as wealthy as Scotland (and rUK) foodbanks are becoming the norm. If this Government wasn't so hell-bent on blindly following a flawed Austerity agenda and targeting the poor instead of the rich tax evaders, foodbanks would not be the norm, they would be the exception.

People will say, but what are the Scottish Government doing about it, why are they not stopping the need for foodbanks? First, you have to ask yourself why they are not. With limited resources and restrictions on welfare the Scottish Government have little options open to them. But, they have mitigated the bedroom tax, we get free prescriptions, a council tax freeze, longer free child care, free elderly care, and when possible lump sums to poverty charities and foodbanks. Without the near federalism we were promised by all 3 Unionist Party leaders in the dying days of the Indyref campaign, or the preferred option of Independence Scotland will always be at the mercy of Westminster and their austerity anti-poor agenda. Labour won't save us, they have proved last week they won't stand up for the poorest in society and they are in so much turmoil at the minute we are facing another 10-20yrs of Tory Government.

There are 50 Trussell Trust foodbanks in Scotland and at least twice as many independent ones. Around 117,000 referrals to foodbanks were made in Scotland in 2014/15 - **up 63%** on 2013/14. Over 90% of the food handed out by Trussell Trust is donated by the public, last year they donated 10,280 tonnes of food.

Scotland has the wealth to make foodbanks a thing of the past, but as long as our finances are controlled by a Government, one we rarely vote for, 400 miles away foodbanks will remain and David Mundell will continue smiling when opening new ones.

**Syria and the secret mission of "Bomber" Cameron.** As British acts of **Anti-Democracy** go, the recent disclosure that despite a crushing commons **defeat** for the involvement of Britain in the air strikes being launched by the United States, Cameron has secretly agreed to "embed" British pilots (and presumably planes) with the United States air force, must rank as one of the most cynical.

The so-called war on terror, which has been unsuccessfully waged since 9/11, has now continued escalating for fourteen years.

This latest breach of Parliamentary rules and democracy is a frightening reminder that it is in fact America which actually runs the UK armed forces and crucially, dictates our foreign policy. Why else would a British Prime Minister secretly lend his air force to America? The real answer to this is that for Obama to defeat so called Islamic State in Iraq and Levant, he has to APPEAR to have Britain's support militarily - something the British Parliament SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED.

But this put David Cameron in a bad light Internationally, with no support at home, and the USA making disapproving noises about the UK's financial commitment to NATO ( a veiled threat to have us booted off the "top table")

Bomber Cameron, who already has pressure mounting to replace or abandon Trident submarines and missiles, had to basically sneak some air force men and hardware into the Yanks air force, to give the impression of full UK support for American air strikes against the jihadists in Syria.

At present, the UK is mounting air strikes only in Iraq, where the government of Iraq asked for help blasting seven colours of crap out if ISIS /ISIL. So it was just a slight detour and bit of logistical paperwork, to finesse the Tornado bombers over the border into hostile Syria (where we have no mandate or permission to fly).

This now leaves British democracy sidelined and impotent in the face of American manipulation of our right wing Prime Minister. We now can see clearly how the UK is in fact just a large weapons platform on the European side of the Atlantic. These islands are like a huge static aircraft carrier, armed with nuclear weapons, over which Cameron has no authority to launch. (Launch codes have to be sought from the USA )

So if anyone in Britain was under the impression we have control over our armed forces or where they're deployed, then think again. We live in the 51st state. Britain is an American colony now.

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