

EVEL: How will it work? Currently a bill goes through the 3 stages: 1st Reading, 2nd Reading-committee stage-report stage, 3rd Stage. This will significantly change if EVEL is introduced.

Stage One: When a bill is introduced, the Speaker will be required to 'certify' whether the bill, or parts of it, relates exclusively to England, or England and Wales.

Stage Two: The Bill will go through its Second Reading and Committee Stage as normal.

Stage Three: If the Speaker has decided a bill relates only to England it will go through a "special" additional Committee Stage. A legislative Grand Committee will be set up, where only English MPs will consider the Bill. The membership of this committee will reflect the electoral makeup of England. If the Speaker has decided a bill relates only to England and Wales, the legislative Grand Committee will be made up of English and Welsh MPs. This allows English and/or Welsh MPs to debate legislation, and either consent to it or veto it, with no involvement from Scottish MPs – regardless of any knock on effects it may have on Scotland.

Stage Four : The Bill will go through its 4th stage before progressing to the House of Lords (HoL). Post HoL stage the legislative process in the HoL is unchanged. However, any amendments made in the HoL which relate exclusively to England and/or Wales, will be subject to a double majority vote. Meaning these amendments have to be supported by a majority of English and/or Welsh MPs, as well as a majority of all MPs, before they become law. Finance Bills will also go through this new procedure.

So Scottish MPs would still be able to vote on matters which do not relate to their constituents?

Yes, but Mr Hague has insisted the plans would mean **English MPs would have the "decisive" say**. Asked whether former SNP leader Alex Salmond, would be able to vote on English legislation, the Commons Leader said: "He will be voting on it but the decisive votes will be cast by the English Members of Parliament"

What could it affect? Many issues which may appear to be 'England-only' can often have knock-on consequences in terms of Scotland's public finances, for example decisions on NHS spending. The SNP would look to vote against any privatisation of the NHS to protect Scotland's budget as well as retaining the NHS as a proper public service in rUK. Any plans and subsequent legislation to build a third runway at Heathrow would also appear only to relate to England, but will have a huge knock-on effect in Scotland.

What does it mean? Scottish MPs will become 2nd class citizens in the House of Commons. These EVEL plans exclude MPs from Scotland, Wales and N. Ireland, from voting on legislation that could have consequential effects on other parts of the UK. There are also financial implications, decisions taken for England only can lead to changes to Scotland's budget from the UK Government. These plans also put the Speaker in a position where he needs to make political decisions, with no clear procedure about how he will make decisions on 'certifying' a bill as England only.

Information sourced from SNP.org

Next Issue: 4 November 2015

Remember this date - 22 October, 2015

because this is the date English Votes for English Laws (EVEL) passed by 312 to 270. Not only does this politicise the speaker of the house (meant to be impartial) but creates a 2 tier system of MPs, English (and/or Welsh) and the rest.



The Tories pushed through EVEL to counter the West Lothian Question and of course to fulfil **Cameron's vow to England** in his Scottish Referendum victory speech, please note that to date Scotland has seen none of the new powers we were promised during Indyref 2014.

The West Lothian Question came about when West Lothian Anti-Devolution MP Tam Dayell asked during a Scottish Devolution debate in 1977 why he would be allowed to vote on matters affecting Blackburn in Lancashire but not Blackburn West Lothian (if Scotland got a devolved Parliament).

Looking at it from the above viewpoint might make you think that it's only fair that EVEL has been introduced as it balances out the UK with each member nation having their own say in matters relating to them, this would be the case if England had its own devolved Parliament, but it doesn't and that's where the problems start.

Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have their own administrations, funding for these is given to them by Westminster, the amount is based on the Barnett formula. The share Scotland gets is roughly 10% of what England spends. So if England spends £10 on the NHS Scotland's grant is £1. Currently as you are all probably aware of is the Tories (and Labours) drive towards the privatisation of the NHS in England. Every time a section of NHS England is privatised less taxpayer money is used to fund it and as a result Scotland receives less funding, the same applies to education, policing, fire service, and so on. We also have other issues that affect Scotland's budget that are considered English only, HS2 and Heathrow extension are 2 examples. Neither of the 2 examples have any benefit for Scotland, Heathrow is in London and the HS2 Rail link comes nowhere near Scotland but we pay our share of the costs towards them.

Under the new EVEL legislation Scotland's (NI and Wales) MPs can be frozen out from voting for or against increased spending and privatisation in England even though they have knock on effects to what block grant Scotland receives from Westminster, in effect neutralising Scotland's MPs.

Many are calling this the "End of the Union" we don't know about that but it is certainly a step in that direction. So much for David Cameron's plea for Scotland to *"please don't leave the UK, stay and lead the UK"*, think leading is going to be impossible now.

In the year 1705, Westminster passed the Alien Act. Scots were threatened that unless Scotland agreed to negotiate terms for union and accepted the Hanoverian succession by 25 December 1705, there would be a ban on the import of all Scottish staple products into England. Scots would also lose the privileges of Englishmen under English law, thus endangering rights to any property they held in England. The Tories wanted to censure Godolphin for allowing the Act to pass, but the Whigs said that would antagonise the Scots even more by implying that their legislature was inferior to the English. It was far better, they said, to bring union upon the Scots through economic pressure.

In this climate of forced economic pressure, Westminster forced Scotland into the 1707 Act of Union. The terms of the 1707 Act of Union were set out. The terms that David Cameron just trampled to death!

Set out in clause VI; "That all parts of the United Kingdom for ever from and after the Union shall have the same Allowances Encouragements and Drawbacks and be under the same Prohibitions Restrictions and Regulations of Trade and liable to the same Customs and Duties on Import and Export And that the Allowances Encouragements and Drawbacks Prohibitions Restrictions and Regulations of Trade and the Customs and Duties on Import and Export settled in England when the Union commences shall from and after the Union take place throughout the whole United Kingdom."

As you can see, English votes for English laws (EVEL) is not part of the Act and has placed Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland at an unfair democratic disadvantage. EVEL is in fact a constitutional change and as such an equal nation would be contractually obliged to agree to such an amendment to the Act.

We now have the same taxes and penalties but our Westminster MP's are now not on an equal democratic footing. Instead of Gordon Brown's infamous "VOW", we now find ourselves with a democratic deficit and our MP's have been forced in a manner we did not agree to, to become second class MP's in Westminster, with Cameron giving English MP's the power to veto our democratic decisions. EVEL has significantly increased the power of England and reduced our status. There is nothing the same for all nations now.



A Statutory Act is a contract. The Act of Union is a contract under which is supposed to be equal for all parties. It is now abundantly clear that Westminster view themselves in the UK as a dominant force, with us in subservience. As this is in breach of contract, with unilateral imposition and without Scotland's agreement, there is no equal playing field for us and is sufficient for us to void the contract and revert to our original status as an independent nation.

You just simply **cannot** change a legal contract without discussion or agreement from other parties expected to be bound by that contract. To do so is illegal.

Independence is within the grasp of Scotland in the very near future if we desire it.

We now have very strong legal grounds added to the other significant advantages we gain by independence.

In legal terms, David Cameron just violated our constitutional rights and ripped up the Act of Union.

What we do with this is now entirely up to the sovereign people of Scotland.

Remember that the people are always the boss in a democracy of sovereign people. We are not conquered citizens or assets of the UK Corporation. We can be coerced into believing a suggested deception that we are not the power but this is only with our agreement to surrender our sovereign status by voluntary consent.

We have to say, "Yes I agree and you are now the boss" and transfer our power status. Consent **cannot** be implied. They are our servants who are supposed to represent our interests. Without a voice on matters with serious implications for Scotland, it has now become possible for our Sovereign collective democratic will to be ignored or thrown out by another collection of MP's we did not elect to represent us.

EVEL is an assault on democracy for any MP we send to London.

Near the end of the 2014 Independence Referendum we were promised new powers for the Scottish Parliament in a last minute "Purdah breaking vow" **published** in the national press and **broadcast** by the BBC. Instead Cameron **has** increased the power of England and we've got nothing (**not one new power has been delivered to date**). Scotland's proposed amendments **to the Scotland Bill** were completely thrown out by **English MPs**. Every last one of them! England were not even asking for Westminster to give them more power (**although there would be no objection from anyone if England had its own Devolved Parliament**). There is no valid democracy in EVEL in a UK setting, or in the way it was unilaterally decided.

We now have a scenario where it is now inconceivable for the UK to have a Prime Minister from any Nation other than England in this obviously unequal Union. Had EVEL been introduced earlier, the new act would have ruled out some of the most famous names ever to be UK Prime Minister, including nine of the last 20.

- Winston Churchill (at one time MP for Dundee)
- James Callaghan (Cardiff South East)
- Sir Alec Douglas-Home (Kinross and Western Perthshire)
- David Lloyd George (Caernarvon Boroughs)
- Ramsay MacDonald (Aberavon)
- Gordon Brown (Kirkcaldy)
- Andrew Bonar Law (Glasgow Central)
- Herbert Asquith (East Fife)
- Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs)

Perhaps it's now time to give Westminster the sack and remove Scotland from this very unequal and loaded contract.