

# On Gordon Brown's First Queen's Speech

*A letter to the Herald, Nov 2007*

Sir,

We got Gordon Brown's first Queen's Speech in the week we so nearly had a general election instead.

If it represented his much-hyped 'vision', what a let-down.

Mr Brown's deputy, Harriet Harman, said that the hotch-potch of new laws had been arrived at through "listening to the people". I can only wonder which people they're listening to. Certainly not the many hundreds of people across East Hants whose doors I've knocked on in the last few months.

After 111 tax rises, people question where all the money has gone. They want to see less bureaucracy, fewer distorting targets, and funding reaching the front line in healthcare, education and tackling crime. Instead we face more of the same.

People want see a firmer grip on the numbers of people coming to Britain, to ease the strain on over-stretched public services. Instead we get inflammatory (but empty) rhetoric about 'British jobs for British workers', and some half-baked measures.

I've met few people who want to see £19bn spent on an ID cards scheme that would do little for our safety. And I've yet to meet anyone who says Mr Brown is right to go back on his promise for a referendum on the EU Constitution.

This is a government that tries to control everything but can't seem to run anything. There is no new vision here for Britain's future - it's all short-term tricks instead of solving long-term problems.

Sincerely,

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