

Manifesto of the
English Democrats Party
Getting a better deal for England

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Introduction

The aims and objectives of the English Democrats Party are set out in this and succeeding manifestos.

The broad aim of the English Democrats Party is to build a society which accommodates the interests of all the people of England. We aim to do this in an enlightened and democratic way.

It would be unrealistic at this stage for the EDP to set out detailed policies on every issue. We believe that good politics is a matter of good judgement and pragmatic decision-making within the bounds of general principles and objectives. We have set out below the general principles and objectives that guide us.

Democracy

We are committed to government of the people, by the people, for the people. Those with power to affect our way of life must be answerable to the people.

Democracy is much more than the ability to choose, from time to time, between broadly similar parties which compete amongst themselves for power. Real democracy is measured by the ability of the people to manage their political, economic, physical, and cultural environment.

The EDP will be guided by the following general principles:-

- The state should serve the collective interests of its citizens.
- We wish to see a modern and wide-ranging Bill of Rights founded on traditional English civil liberties.
- The EDP seeks a far ranging freedom of access to information.
- Wherever reasonably practicable, public appointments should be chosen by direct election.
- Power should be devolved, as and when practical, within all spheres of government and service provision, including, for example, the education and health services.
- Devolution within England should be through the existing system of local government, subject to modifications that are necessary to meet the needs of a workable and efficient democratic system. The aim should be to enable local people to identify with Local Authorities. We must reverse the trend towards remote and unaccountable decision-making.
- We favour - recognition for traditional counties, which would include the reunification of Yorkshire;
- greater autonomy for Cornwall.
- We favour the use of referenda in local government with a view to using referenda in other tiers of government if the experiment proves successful. A system similar to that used in Switzerland should be the model. This would enable citizens to petition for a referendum on certain policy issues.
- Proposed changes to the constitution should be referred to the electorate in referenda. The results should be binding. There could be a role here for the Second Chamber as guardian of the constitution.
- Rules are needed for the timing and funding of referenda with the aim of making them as fair as possible to all parties involved.

A Parliament for England

The creation of the English Democrats Party was prompted by concerns that recent constitutional reform has ignored the interests and wishes of the people of England.

The people of England should be given the same opportunity as those in other parts of the United Kingdom to enjoy the opportunities and benefits which devolution can bring. It should be seen as a chance to build on the English democratic tradition and to create institutions suited to modern needs.

Any UK citizen who is on the electoral register in England shall be entitled to take part as a voter and candidate in the election of members of the English Parliament.

There are many good constitutional and financial reasons for creating an English Parliament but the over-riding argument is that the English are a nation and as such they are entitled to a parliament which will acknowledge and promote their identity and culture.

We demand action on the following matters.

England to be recognised and treated as a unified country. Scotland and Wales have been recognised as countries and their people given the opportunity to vote in referenda for devolved government. Scotland now has a parliament, and Wales an assembly. In contrast, the people of England have been denied the

opportunity to choose an English Parliament. Instead, England is being dismembered into nine regions. We find this discrimination unacceptable. England should be a political entity with its own parliament and executive.

The immediate abandonment of the Barnett formula. The *formula* institutionalises discrimination against the people of England by ensuring that public spending in Scotland and Wales is far higher per head of population than in England. The Barnett formula diverts about £8 billion of extra public expenditure to Scotland each year. This means that the entire population of Scotland enjoys a subsidy averaging £30 per person per week. This has meant, for example, smaller class sizes in Scotland, higher pay for teachers, shorter hospital waiting lists, and the availability of prescription drugs and surgical procedures which are unavailable in England on grounds of cost. This unjustified discrimination must end. A new fairer system is needed which enables England's share of the £8 billion to be used to improve public services in England.

Part One

The division of our aims and objectives between Part One and Part Two is broadly in line with the arrangement made for Scottish devolution. Part One contains *devolved* matters, which would be the responsibility of the English parliament and executive. Part Two contains *reserved* matters, which would continue to be the responsibility of the UK parliament and government.

Public Services

We believe that it is the responsibility of government to ensure that all citizens have access to high quality healthcare and education, which should be free at the point of supply. Public services should not be seen as a minimal safety net for the less fortunate.

While all public services should be the responsibility of government, where appropriate, use should be made of the private sector to provide the elements that make up those services. It is important that our finite resources be used as efficiently as possible

Government should be responsible for providing a police force and judicial system which enjoys public confidence.

The immediate provision of public services should not be gained at the cost of long-term debt. We have no right to defer the cost of services so that they become a burden for future generations.

Health

We are committed to making the National Health Service an efficient organisation which provides a high quality service for all citizens. The need for improvement is such that it may be necessary to adopt a simplified approach to structure and management.

The priority given to a patient's treatment should be based on medical need, not artificial management targets. Bearing this in mind, we would create a N.H.S. Inspectorate on a similar basis to the very successful schools Inspectorate. Its purpose would be to raise standards of service, ensure equal quality of healthcare throughout England, and check malpractice in both the NHS and the private healthcare sector.

Care in the Community as a policy has manifestly failed, not only to protect the public, but also to protect the mentally ill, partly through inadequate funding. EDP policy is that as long as it is considered that an individual poses a significant risk either to themselves or to the public, they should remain in secure care.

Disability

The EDP would seek means for providing greater education, training, and employment opportunities for the disabled and chronically sick.

Education

As in other public services, there is a need to constantly improve standards. The quality of education should be equal throughout England.

England's prosperity is not based on natural resources but on the skills and enterprise of her people. Our wellbeing is bound up with the quality of education and training. Education is an expensive investment but ignorance is even more costly, in personal, economic and social terms. A substantial proportion of the

funds released to England from the ending of the Barnett formula should be used to reduce class sizes, increase teachers pay, and improve buildings and equipment.

We recognise that for social and economic reasons, some sections of the English population do not appreciate the importance of providing their children with a positive attitude to education. This lapse has contributed to the emergence of an anti-authority youth-culture which sees education and the discipline needed for successful learning as a form of repression to be rebelled against. This is part of a wider social and cultural problem that cannot be tackled by teachers and funding alone.

The EDP would encourage positive attitudes to education as part of a wider programme for promoting communal values. When education is widely seen as an aid to greater freedom, happiness and prosperity, schools will become more pleasant places for pupils and teachers, and educational standards will rise.

Primary & Secondary Education

The EDP supports parental choice. Where there is a demand for it, schools should be able to free themselves from local education authority control and be run independently in a way that suits local needs.

The EDP supports the continued work of the Schools Inspectorate in the provision of independent information on the quality of education in schools.

Higher and Continuing Education

The EDP would provide greater resources for continuing lifetime education and thereby enhance the opportunities open to all citizens.

An Inspectorate similar to that of the Schools Inspectorate should monitor and report on the education and effectiveness of all continuing education establishments in England.

Transport

Only the state can bring together the resources and long-term strategic planning that is necessary for the creation of an integrated transport infrastructure.

Transport policy should give proper weight to economic, environmental and public service considerations. All of these issues need to be taken into account when planning and building a cheap, efficient and safe integrated transport system.

There should be greater local involvement in transport planning and a more equal distribution of resources throughout England.

Greater use should be made of light railways, trams, cycle-ways and pedestrian friendly areas.

Agriculture and Fisheries

English agriculture should be organised and, where necessary, financed in a way that suits English interests. Likewise, English fishing grounds should be treated as a national resource and be managed by a body which includes representatives of the English fishing industry.

The aim of English agriculture should be to provide good quality food at a reasonable price. This should be done in a way that is environmentally friendly. Concern for the environment should not cause us to lose sight of the fact that the primary role of farmers is to produce food.

The whole array of agricultural subsidies and marketing schemes needs overhauling. The strategic aim should be to help those in temporary need, and secure reliable supplies. To this end we favour greater use of targeted support, and fewer general subsidies.

Support, where appropriate, would be provided for farmers who wish to switch away from *factory farming* to mixed farming and organic production.

Schemes to encourage the local production and distribution of food will be developed.

In all areas of agriculture we should seek more environmentally friendly and healthy production. We should strive to ensure that all rules and regulations which are applied to domestic production are also applied to imports.

Ecology and the Environment

The EDP believes that the resources of land and sea should be used in a way which gives due consideration to the long-term consequences. Each generation holds the environment in trust for future generations. We should not leave them to bear the cost of our selfish and short-sighted behaviour.

Guiding principles

- We recognise the shortcomings of the Kyoto Treaty but support initiatives which aim to guide us to a low carbon economy.
- Greater use of renewable resources and the more efficient use of energy. This should include encouragement for *Green* industries, especially energy generation, and the construction of energy efficient buildings.
- Laws to prevent and deter pollution. The polluter should be made to pay.
- Controls on noise pollution from roads, airports, domestic, and other sources.
- All major planning decisions should be subject to an efficient and speedy system of public enquiry with the final decision being made by an English Parliament.
- Much tighter restrictions on green-field development and a better use of brown-field sites.
- Encourage the use of local building materials and designs throughout England. Greater consideration should be given to aesthetics. Our towns and cities have for many years been plagued with ugly buildings and uninspired uniformity of design. The fault for this often lies not with architects or planners but with those who determine the allocation of funds. Too often the overriding consideration for new buildings and development projects is cost. Modern architectural designs and building techniques could, in the proper place, greatly improve our environment.
- Improvement in building standards, e.g. better sound insulation and larger minimum room sizes.
- Greater local control of planning and other environmental issues.
- Promotion of viable village communities with affordable accommodation for the young.
- Animal experimentation to be sanctioned only in connection with human health and where no practicable alternative exists.

Policing

Policing is an increasingly difficult job due to changes in our society, which now lacks the social cohesion and shared values that once gave us a mostly peaceful and well-ordered way of life. Our cities have become places where it is impossible to perform traditional communal policing.

We should seek a return to a system of policing which recognises the principle that all citizens are treated equally. In their efforts to prevent crime and catch criminals the police should not be hindered and demoralised by unreasonable ideological constraints.

We should not lose sight of the fact that the basis for the maintenance of law and order in England rests on a firm foundation of active participation by law-abiding citizens. A relationship of trust and co-operation between citizens and police is essential to effective policing and the prevention of crime. With that in mind, it is reasonable to expect that policing should not be oppressive. The aim is a peaceable society in which liberty and justice can flourish.

It is essential that the police force be adequately trained and resourced.

Police forces should be more democratically accountable than at present. This would require the election of Chief Constables or the Police Authorities which appoint them.

The Legal System

The primary role of a legal system is to provide the means for settling disputes. It should enable those who suffer loss, in the form personal injury, theft, or damage to property, to be properly compensated by the party at fault. Laws, and the penalties for breaking them, should comply with the principles of natural justice.

As societies have become more complex, so have their law codes. To a great extent, this is unavoidable. However, states and their governing elites are extending the reach of law into areas that infringe upon individual liberties. The result is a body of law which is more restrictive and complex than it need be.

Many of the customs and principles of English law are being undermined in the political quest for greater conformity with Continental ideas and practices. Law is being used as a tool for imposing dogma. One of the consequences of these changes is that the police are increasingly being made the enforcers of political doctrine and moving further away from their traditional role of upholding the delicate balance between Order and Liberty.

- In order to obtain justice, citizens must feel able to consult and employ the services of the legal profession. Many people are deterred from this by the procedures and costs of the present legal system. Improvements have been made in recent years but more needs to be done to make the system *user friendly* and efficient
- The English Democrats Party favours less law and a simplification of law. There are far too many matters currently covered by the criminal law. There should be a drastic reduction and rationalisation of the number and extent of criminal offences.
- We must reform the jury system but not abandon it because the jury provides a democratic check on the legal system. The law is not the property of lawyers; it belongs to the people and should serve their needs.
- Our preference is for a return to comprehensible, just and effective law. Given its current chaotic state, the law should be codified.
- Once the criminal law has been properly codified, the EDP would ensure that the criminal law is vigorously policed and enforced.
- Except in an emergency there should be a single annual implementation date for new law. This will help rectify the current muddled situation where no one can be sure, without considerable effort or expense, whether a clause of a new Act has been brought into force or not. Also, some rules, for example the Civil Procedure Rules, are being rewritten so frequently that new editions are being published more than once a month! This leads, not surprisingly, to the shameful situation where no-one, not even the judiciary, can be sure what is the current rule in force without first making unreasonable efforts to research the point.
- In order to avoid such excessive complexity developing again, a monitoring system should be devised which ensures that new law is unambiguously comprehensible and properly and efficiently enforceable. This could be a function of a reformed Second Chamber.
- The EDP respects the right of victims of crime to defend themselves and their property against criminals. The EDP would extend the right of self-help.
- The EDP believes that every victim of a criminal offence should have the right to address the court on the question of sentence and for the court to be required to bear the victim's views in mind when passing sentence.
- It is not acceptable that 100,000 *hardened* criminals commit over half of all crime in the U.K. Once a criminal is identified as beyond effective rehabilitation he/she must be kept out of the community until no longer a risk.
- Prisons should be designed and equipped so that prisoners are not subject to degrading conditions.

Drugs and Alcohol

We believe that government should encourage a healthy lifestyle which makes the minimum use of drugs of all kinds. However, if individuals choose to ignore the recommendations of government, they should be free to do so provided they do not impinge on other people's rights. With that qualification, and subject to what follows, the EDP takes the view that the use of alcohol and soft drugs should be a matter for individual conscience.

The EDP favours an independent enquiry into the pros and cons of legalising the use cannabis. The presumption should be that cannabis should be legalised unless it can be shown that there are good health or social reasons for not doing so. We recognise that there are good arguments on either side. What is needed is a proper conclusion to the debate so that it is possible to move on with an agreed stance and suitable measures.

It is clear that the current policy for dealing with problems of addiction are not working adequately and there is an ever rising tide of criminality arising from, in particular, drug abuse. Addiction problems are very difficult to solve and require careful analysis. One particularly frustrating aspect of addiction is that family and friends are often aware of the plight of the addicted person but unable to do what is best for them. One area of reform should be greater provision for addicts to be subject to compulsory treatment in secure care. All those who commit criminal offences whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol should be subject to compulsory assessment and if found to be addicted should immediately be taken into such care.

The most important aspect of the fight against drug dealing criminals is that any policy should seek to destroy their market, protect the public, and punish offenders.

Part Two

Families

It is often overlooked that our society is founded on the institutions of marriage and family life. The family is the place where cultural and moral values are most successfully passed from one generation to the next.

We favour the promotion of marital families, consisting of mother, father and children, as the preferred building block of our society.

We wish to create a social and financial environment where men and women can enjoy the opportunity of a career and also raise a family. New attitudes and practices are needed so that raising a family is no longer seen as a second best option to the maximisation of wealth and leisure. We need families with children because without them our nation and way of life will cease to exist. We need young people to train as nurses, doctors, police, teachers, soldiers and all the many other occupations that a society requires.

It is our policy to strive to make family life culturally desirable. We will advocate taxation and welfare policies that are conducive to family life.

Pensioners

There should be proper provision of pensions and care for elderly citizens so that they are able to enjoy a decent standard of living.

The following objectives should be pursued.

- The best pension entitlement that can be afforded;
- A tax system that rewards rather than, as at present, discourages thrift;
- A more flexible retirement age, thus allowing people more freedom to choose the date of their retirement;
- Improvements in the provision of specialised medical care and services for the elderly.

The Economy

A Mixed Market Economy

We favour a market economy but not an unrestrained market economy. Trade and industry should, within reason, meet the needs of the society within which it operates. Societies should not be expected to subvert their democratic and cultural institutions in order to meet the needs of trade and industry. More consumption does not necessarily produce more happiness.

A healthy economy is a mixed economy. We should expand our manufacturing sector and halt the trend towards an over-reliance on service industries. It is a fallacy that manufacturing industry is low-tech *metal-bashing* which can be replaced with service industries. Most of the service sector does not provide high-tech jobs. Catering, retailing, warehousing, and call-centre work is mostly low-tech, low paid work. The aerospace, electronics, pharmaceutical, and engineering industries should be the bedrock of our economy and the core around which a high-skill, high-pay service sector is built.

In furtherance of this policy, and in the interests of a healthy economy, there should be an industrial policy which promotes and expands manufacturing industry. Manufacturing is an essential part of a modern and prosperous economy.

Economic Independence

Appropriate encouragement and targeted support should be given to ensure that certain strategic resources are produced in England. Complete self-sufficiency is impossible but we should ensure that we are not placed in a position where we are unable to defend our vital interests because we lack control of the necessary strategic resources.

Our economy and currency should be managed, as far as possible, by our own government. States may be less independent than they once were but we should resist those who would leave our economic wellbeing

in the hands of global corporations and institutions. We should retain what independence and control we have and strive to gain more.

A One Country Economy

There should be a more equal spread of government, and government directed spending throughout England. This objective could be furthered by an English Parliament committed to ensuring that good public services and the infrastructure for a modern economy exist in all parts of England.

Employment & Welfare Provision

We believe that the government should pursue policies which provide the conditions necessary for full employment.

Welfare payments should, where possible, be linked to employment and retraining schemes. We support the principle of National Insurance benefits, such as Unemployment Benefit, providing short to medium term relief. Income Support should provide a net for citizens with dependent families or other commitments requiring additional support.

The National Insurance system has been allowed by successive governments to become unacceptably open to abuse. There are currently millions more National Insurance numbers than the adult population of the whole of the United Kingdom. The scheme should be immediately overhauled to prevent fraud and duplication. Once this process has been completed, there should be vigorous enforcement of the rule that persons without a valid national insurance number should not be allowed to undertake paid employment or claim any form of welfare benefit.

The provision of welfare for non-citizens should only be on the basis of reciprocal rights between states.

Sovereignty

Sovereignty is the ability to make and enforce law subject to no higher authority.

Sovereignty belongs to the people, who lend it to democratic institutions. We have the inalienable right to determine the nature of the institutions which exercise our sovereign powers and the conditions on which they do so.

The European Union

The EDP favours European co-operation and trade but not a European political entity which undermines the independence, sovereignty, and democratic institutions of European states.

European integration, as conceived by the Frenchman Jean Monnet, had the aim of tying Germany into a network of political and economic links with France and other European states so that it would be impossible for Germany to go to war with them. That was by no means the only motivation for seeking ever-closer political and economic union.

The interests of Germany and France came together in the peculiar circumstances following World War II. Advantage could be gained for both by combining a post-war German economic revival with French political and agricultural dominance. Germany gained a secure market for its manufacturing industry and France gained a protected market and financial support for its agriculture. In addition, France obtained privileged access to the European market for its colonial produce, and took the lead in building European institutions on the French model – centralised and bureaucratic. The aim from the beginning was to enmesh the states of Europe in an economic, political and military union from which they could not break free. That goal was, and still is, considered more important than the democratic nicety of explaining the goal to the electorate and seeking its approval.

The states of the EU cannot be successfully run as either an economic or social whole. Their economic and cultural circumstances are very different. Each needs to be governed in a way which accords not only with material needs but also with the democratic, cultural and other traditions of the indigenous nations. The one-size-fits-all approach of EU institutions is a recipe for disaster.

The EU has become a top heavy and outdated bureaucratic hulk which is unsuited to an age when the people of Europe need democratic nation-states to protect them and their unique cultures from the excesses of global corporations, global institutions and the global economy. The EU is a part of the problem, not the solution.

The Euro

We reject the principle of a European currency because it would bring a loss of economic and political independence. It would strike at the very heart of our democratic institutions. Our stance does not arise from a sentimental attachment to the Pound or to tradition; it is founded on the belief that an independent, successful, and democratic state needs its own currency. Our wellbeing and way of life will be better protected if we are able to govern ourselves and thereby determine our own economic, social, and cultural priorities. We will also be better placed to make the most of our assets and focus on finding solutions to our problems

The principle reasons for promoting the Euro are as follows:

- To end a system which in effect makes the US dollar a global reserve currency. That situation gives a great economic and political advantage to the USA. Among other things, it enables US businesses to buy foreign assets at favourable exchange rates. It also allows the USA to run massive trade deficits. Other states are in effect subsidising US consumption.
- To bind the states of Europe together in a political and economic system from which they cannot break free.

While the first aim is laudable, and the benefits of success would be great, the method employed is impracticable and damaging. It will end in economic and social disruption on a massive scale. The second aim is undesirable on many grounds, not least those of democracy and cultural diversity.

The British people face constant propaganda which seeks to convince them that the Euro is an inevitable part of unstoppable *progress*. We are led to believe that its adoption is merely an adjustment to modern needs; an aid to consumer convenience; something that is welcomed without misgivings elsewhere in a more progressive and enlightened Europe. It is suggested that the Euro is a purely economic matter, the decision to join being dependent only on the technicality of meeting *the five economic tests*. In reality, the full ramifications of a single European currency are much wider than portrayed. In addition to its economic impracticability and inefficiency, it would prevent us having democratic control over the management of our economy and our way of life.

World Trade

Global corporations should view their ability to trade in a society as a privilege, not an absolute right. Governments should do their best to ensure that global corporations treat their societies no less favourably than others. For example, if corporations choose to regard the world as a global market when considering labour and other production costs, they should also treat it as a global market when it comes to pricing. If they produce in China their prices for goods and services should reflect that. Differential pricing zones are a hindrance to fair and free trade and should not be tolerated.

Changes need to be made to the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the way it is governed. Our government should take the lead in pushing for reform of WTO rules and structure, or produce plans for a new organisation to take its place. Any attempt to resurrect the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), or something similar, should be resisted.¹

Globalism

Our parliamentary democracy is being weakened. One of the principal reasons for this is that the UK government and Westminster parliament are no longer responsible for many areas of policy and legislation. Power is steadily passing to the European Union, global institutions, and global corporations. Powerful organisations over which we have no democratic control are creating political and economic structures that serve their interests not ours. In doing so, they are destroying our way of life and communal cohesion.

The globalism being inflicted on us is neither desirable nor inescapable. It is not the product of an inevitable historical process. We need not stand by and allow our identity and way of life to be sacrificed to its needs.

¹ The *Multilateral Agreement on Investment* was scheduled to be signed in spring 1998 but it was so ambitious and extreme that it proved impossible to gain the necessary support. The aim of MAI was to ensure that global corporations could operate beyond the control of states. If MAI or an agreement like it ever came into effect, it would make corporations the legal equal of states. Corporations would be able to move capital and plant around the world as they pleased and sue any state which interfered. MAI was to be an institution, similar to WTO and the World Bank, with an appointed body which would enforce its rules.

Defence

The EDP supports continued membership of NATO as a strictly defensive alliance which does not interfere in the internal affairs of its member states.

Our armed forces should enjoy the highest standards of training and equipment. Their primary role should be as a fighting force. The resources devoted to them should match the commitments they are expected to fulfil. The main purpose of our armed forces should be to protect our country and the interests of its people.

We are opposed to the use of our forces in operations where they are in effect serving as mercenaries of a foreign state.

Members of the armed services who suffer injury in the service of their country should be quickly and properly cared for and compensated.

We would retain a nuclear deterrent but explore other means for providing an effective strategic defence.

Foreign Policy

We seek a global system consisting of independent nation-states, each with its own identity, character, and culture. Each state should be free to trade in a way that suits its needs and customs.

We favour special co-operation and links with those states, wherever they may be, which uphold the principles of national self-determination and fair trade. Overseas aid should be provided in furtherance of these ideals and in accordance with the needs of English national interests.

Our history as a maritime trading power has provided us with a unique web of relationships, of which we should make use. We are in a position where we need not be ruled by either Brussels or Washington. We need the self-confidence and will to forge a truly independent foreign policy.

Immigration

We need to change immigration policy so that it better reflects the needs and wishes of the English people.

There should be a points system for entry to the UK which is based on the Canadian model. Points should be awarded for, among other things: educational and professional qualification; family links with England; financial resources; the ability to speak English. In other words, entry should be determined by our needs as a society and the ability of newcomers to be absorbed into the prevailing public culture. High priority should be given to creating a peaceful society which is bound together by shared values and perceptions.

Should there be an economic need for immigration it should be met by the employment of people on fixed term work permits. Our aim should be to meet the need for skilled workers from within.

International law is not fixed for all time. We should not feel bound by rules that were devised 50 years ago when circumstances were very different. Asylum seekers should seek asylum in a state adjoining or nearby the state from which they are fleeing. The wishes and interests of the English should be the dominant factors in determining asylum and immigration policies for England.

Our principle concern is to preserve and build on what is left of English cultural unity and social cohesion. The preservation of our identity and culture are at least as important as economic considerations. We do not accept the fallacious but widely publicised economic arguments for mass immigration. For the most part they greatly exaggerate the economic benefits and wholly ignore the economic, social, and cultural costs.

We must regain control of our borders. The customs and immigration services should be strengthened and laws vigorously enforced.

England and Multi-culturalism

It is a fact that during the past forty years people of many different cultures have come to live in England. Our country is in that sense a multi-cultural society. However, *multi-culturalism* is an ideology which suggests that a mix of many cultures in one society is desirable and that it is the duty of government to actively encourage cultural diversity within the state. Further, it suggests that all cultures should be treated as equal. A logical extension of this is that all languages, histories and law codes should be treated equally. This is clearly impossible in a unified country.

All ethnic groups should be free to promote their own culture and identity but the public culture of England should be that of the indigenous English. This position is consistent with the rights of indigenous nations everywhere.

The English

It is common for those who assert their English identity to be challenged in a way that would be considered insulting if directed elsewhere. So as to avoid misunderstanding, and to meet the demands of those who are hostile to any assertion of Englishness, we have set out below what we mean by *the English*.

The English can be defined in the same way that other nations are defined. To be English is to be part of a community. We English share a communal history, language and culture. We have a communal identity and memory. We share a *we* sentiment; a sense of belonging. These things cannot be presented as items on a checklist. Our community, like others, has no easily defined boundaries but we exist and we have the will to continue to exist.

The People of England

The people of England are all those UK citizens who live in England. In electoral terms, *the people of England* are all those UK citizens who are on the electoral roll of an English constituency. *The people of England* therefore includes the people of many nations, all of whom share a common UK citizenship.

St George's Day

The people of England should be able to celebrate St George's day as a Bank Holiday.

A Parliament for England

We welcome the creation of a Scottish Parliament and seek a well thought out constitutional settlement that is fair to all parts of the United Kingdom. This should include parliaments for England and Wales, and a reformed Second Chamber at Westminster.

Our objective is the creation of an English Parliament within the United Kingdom. It should have at least the same powers as the Scottish Parliament. We reject the plans for regional assemblies because, among other things, they will promote disunity and conflict within England.

The full extent of devolution and constitutional reform during the next two decades is difficult to foresee. The current Scottish model may mark the limit of reform or it may go further and give rise to a federal constitution or complete independence for Scotland. We recognise that the future shape of the United Kingdom is therefore to a large extent dependent upon the wishes of the people of Scotland. However, whatever course devolution takes, we favour the retention of a constitutional monarchy and a continuing association between the existing parts of the United Kingdom, albeit within a different constitutional framework.

If the United Kingdom should break-up, we would seek a new special relationship between the parts. This could be pursued through a Council of the Isles, an organisation similar to the Nordic Council in which all members are treated as equals. Representatives serving on the Council would seek areas where members could co-operate for their mutual benefit.

The Constitutional Case for Reform

It was Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for West Lothian, who asked why MPs representing Scottish constituencies should be able to vote in the UK Parliament on matters affecting England (e.g. health and education) when MPs representing English constituencies are unable to vote on similar matters affecting Scotland? There are some, like Lord Chancellor Irvine, a Scotsman, who suggest that the best way to deal with the West-Lothian question is not to ask or answer it. Such insufferable arrogance is a very good reason for opening the position of Lord Chancellor to public election.

Of at least equal importance to *who is able to vote on legislation*, is *who is able to initiate policies and legislation*. MPs representing Scottish and Welsh constituencies can be appointed as Ministers (e.g. transport) and thereby initiate policies that affect only England. In a similar way they can, as members of the Cabinet, take part in the formulation of policy and legislation for England.

Furthermore, legislation affecting only England is subject to scrutiny and amendment in the House of Lords, whereas Scottish legislation on devolved matters is not subject to the approval of a second chamber.

There is also the issue of English under representation in the House of Commons. England has 40 fewer MPs than is warranted by its population size. This means that English votes are worth less than Scottish votes.

Finally, the Barnett formula, which was devised in 1978 to undermine support for the Scottish National Party, is grossly unfair to England. It was justified on the grounds that there needed to be 20% higher expenditure in Scotland in order to bring its public services up to the standard in England. The allocation of funds was to be based on relative *need*. There has been no assessment of need since 1976. In 1997 Scotland was the third richest *region* in the UK with a provision of public services that far exceeded those available in many parts of England. The formula is clearly a political expedient and not based on a proper assessment of need. Many parts of England are more deserving of special funding than is Scotland. The Barnett formula should be ended immediately and a new scheme devised that would both direct resources to those parts of England which are in greatest need and raise standards generally.

It can be seen that solutions like the one proposed by the Conservative Party, known as ‘English votes on English laws’, will neither redress the unfair treatment of the people of England nor help produce a coherent constitutional settlement. It is a completely inadequate response to the problems outlined above. A remedy must address much more than who votes for what. It needs to consider who initiates policy and who has a mandate to do so. The Conservative Party has so far been unable to offer a sensible solution to the problem because it is obsessed by the need to preserve *the Union* at whatever the cost to England. That obsession is a weakness which Scottish politicians in Scotland, in Westminster, and in government, are able to take advantage of.

The Labour Party and government are dominated and controlled by Scots so it is understandable that they should be enthusiastic about a Scottish Parliament and the preservation of Scottish identity. A more pressing reason for the creation of a Scottish Parliament was their concern to preserve the dominant position of the Labour Party in Scotland. In doing that they feel no guilt about giving preferential treatment to Scotland. They clearly have little empathy with the English or their interests.

The Liberal Democrats and their Scottish leader, Charles Kennedy, despite their frequently expressed concerns for democracy and fairness, are opposed to putting those ideals into effect by allowing the people of England to have a parliament of their own.

The Barnett Formula

In 1996/7, total expenditure per head of population on services in Scotland was 24% higher than in England. That figure is for all public service and welfare spending, including that on social security. If we look at spending in those policy areas which have been devolved to Scotland, it can be seen that spending is on average 31% per person higher in Scotland than in England. Spending in Scotland on health and personal social services was 22% higher; education 31% higher; transport 31% higher; trade, industry, energy and employment 55% higher; housing 87% higher; agriculture 123% higher. This additional funding for Scotland under the Barnett formula amounts to £8 billion each year.

The unjustified and unfair institutionalised discrimination against the people of England will not end until they make their displeasure known. One way of doing that is to join and vote for the EDP.

Membership of the English Democrats Party

The people of England need a political party which will reinvigorate our democracy and strive to preserve and promote our English way of life. We need a party which will do its utmost to give us greater control of our lives and our environment. Membership of the English Democrats Party is open to anyone, whatever their ethnicity or culture. All we require is that members are broadly in agreement with our manifesto and abide by the rules of our constitution.
