

Owen Smith statement on the extension of time for Northern Ireland power-sharing talks

Commenting on the news that talks to restore power-sharing at Stormont have been extended to Monday, **Owen Smith MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, said:**

"I am concerned that a deal has not been reached for today's deadline but I welcome the news that the parties are continuing their intensive discussions over the next few days. It is the right decision by the Secretary of State to hold open the door for further negotiations if there is a chance that a deal can still be reached.

"If there is no further progress over the weekend, however, the Secretary of State must come to Parliament on Monday to explain what additional steps he intends to take to ensure a stable government can be re-established at Stormont."

Jeremy Corbyn statement following House of Commons' approval of the Queen's Speech

Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party said:

"The Conservatives survived by the skin of their teeth today, supported by the DUP, but this is a government in chaos.

"The Conservatives are all over the place on Brexit, with ministers contradicting each other. On public sector pay, they say one thing and then do another, voting yesterday to continue the cutting the pay of our nurses, firefighters, police and other public sector workers. And today, they were forced to finally promise that women from Northern Ireland will no longer have to pay for abortions on the NHS under opposition and public pressure.

"This

Government is out of control, with no mandate for continued cuts to our schools, hospitals, police and other vital public services or for a race-to-the-bottom Brexit. Labour will oppose these policies every step of the way.

“Labour offers a clear alternative, laid out in our manifesto, which would put wealth, power and opportunity back in the hands of the many not the few.”

[Passengers should not have had to go to the courts to seek accountability – McDonald](#)

Commenting on today’s High Court ruling ordering the Secretary of State for Transport to produce a report into Southern Rail within 14 days, **Andy**

McDonald MP, Labour’s Shadow Transport Secretary said:

“Passengers should not have had to go to the courts to seek accountability.

“Ultimately, the buck stops with the government. Tory ministers, who designed and awarded the franchise, have been ducking their responsibility for Southern’s abysmal service and for directing this unnecessary industrial dispute.

“A Labour government would stand up for the interest of passengers rather than train companies, taking Southern back into public ownership and creating a new body to have strategic oversight for the railway to end the chaos and fragmentation that has plagued Southern.”

[This chaotic Government is breaking its own laws by refusing to set out](#)

its timetable for the state pension age – Abrahams

Debbie Abrahams MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary,

raised a Point of Order today on the Government's failure to meet its legal deadline to set out its state pension age timetable. Debbie said:

"This chaotic Government is breaking its own laws by refusing to set out its timetable for the state pension age."

"Should they implement the recommendations of the Cridland Review, up to 34 million people will be expected to work longer."

"Given their complete failure to adequately communicate the equalisation of the state pension age for women, it is absolutely vital that this Tory Government comes clean with its plan now."

"In our manifesto Labour is committed to leaving the state pension age at 66, as part of our plans to ensure a secure and dignified retirement for the many, not just a few."

Referring the bid to a phase two inquiry by the CMA is the Government doing just the bare minimum – Watson

Tom Watson MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, commenting on Karen

Bradley's statement on the Sky/Fox merger, said:

"There are no surprises in the statement today."

"Referring the bid to a phase two inquiry by the CMA is the Government doing just the bare minimum. If the Government now accepts further undertakings in lieu instead

it
will throw the integrity of this process into question.

“Ofcom’s
finding that the Murdochs remain fit and proper to hold a broadcasting
licence,
despite ‘significant corporate failure’ at Fox News, is disappointing. If the
executives who ran a company involved in systematic and widespread
criminality,
including phone hacking and police bribery, can pass the fit and proper test,
it begs the question – is the test itself fit for purpose?”

“If
Karen Bradley really wants the facts then part two of the Leveson Inquiry
must
go ahead to investigate the corporate governance failures that allowed the
phone hacking scandal to take place.

“It’s
clear the rules need to be reviewed and the next Labour government will look
again at the laws governing media ownership in this country.

“The
General Election result last month shows the Murdoch media empire can no
longer
deliver Tory majorities. So the Government has nothing to lose. It must not
let
this bid proceed.”