

Helen Jones MP
House of Commons
London
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4th June 2013

Dear Ms Jones,

I have recently written to Lord Deben following his excellent speech in the House of Lords' second reading of the Marriage (Same sex couples) Bill and realised that despite my previous correspondence I had not thanked you for the small part you played in the Commons.

So I thank you for voting against the amendments to “protect” those who would want to treat me as a second class citizen while performing the public service they would be paid to do.

I would like to thank you for more but, alas, I can't. According to Hansard those two amendments were the only votes you made at the report stage and nor did you vote in the third reading. I also note that your only contribution to the debate was an interjection seemingly in support of the amendments you later voted against.

I have been contacting you on this and other issues and in return received only acknowledgement postcards. At the second reading of the Marriage (Same sex couples) Bill, I only got any response via a direct message on Twitter after publicly and repeatedly asking what your plans were and pointing out (in a message which also included a local Conservative activist) that I had not heard anything from you.

This lack of response is immensely disheartening. It is telling me that I do not matter and that I effectively have no representative in the House of Commons. I want to write to you about the return of the Communications Data Bill currently being mooted, the censorship plans being talked about and the criminal legal aid reforms being consulted on, but I fear that I will be ignored as I have been here – these are topics which impact civil liberties, freedoms of speech and association and freedoms from persecution and surveillance and our justice system which will need opposition to defeat if the government decides to support.

I became politically aware really in 1997 when Labour won back power from the Conservatives. I remember the elation and the hope. Since then I felt increasing disillusionment and disenfranchisement. While advances like National Minimum Wage and Tax Credits were generally good ideas, their implementation left a lot to be desired. The 10p tax rate introduction was good, it's removal an coldly cynical move which hurt more than it helped.

I have felt betrayed by Labour over the Iraq war, the Digital Economy Act, Civil Partnerships, aspects of the various Equality legislation (particularly those allowing religious organisations to continue to

discriminate), tuition fees, attacks on the welfare state, ASBOs and other attacks on our justice system and civil liberties.

I am now seeing a Labour party which seems to want to try and outdo the Conservatives in putting down people supported by the Welfare State. A Labour party which accepts and pushes the “skivers vs strivers” line. A Labour party which focuses on punishment of poverty rather than redistribution of wealth or caring. A Labour party which is still clinging to the same attacks on civil liberty which gave rise to (my) disillusionment.

A Labour party with no ideas of its own which is going to hand the Conservatives a victory at the next election not because they deserve it but because the Labour party doesn't stand for anything but mimicking the Conservatives.

This all saddens me greatly.

Yours,

Alex Lambert