

The King's speech and Parliament

The King spoke well with a moving tribute to his late mother and his clear pledge to undertake his new tasks in the spirit of public service above politics which informed the Queen for seventy years. At the Privy Council he reaffirmed his wish to uphold our democratic traditions and to be guided by the Parliaments of his realms.

In the coming week the UK Parliament will rest adjourned in mourning. The Palace of Westminster will be turned into more of a fortress than normal in preparation for the funeral of the Queen and the arrival of numerous Presidents, Heads of State and government from around the world to London for this great and sad occasion. The Queen's body will lie in state in Westminster Hall in preparation. The external business of government will stop, with politics suspended whilst the relevant Ministers are involved in the preparations and events surrounding the death of the monarch. The nation mourns with its government until the funeral.

Meanwhile the country wrestles with the energy crisis and the cost of living pressures. It is fortunate that the government was able to make a reassuring statement before these sad events that relief is on its way from unaffordable fuel bills. Behind the closed office doors it is important that work goes on to complete the plans for the energy package and for the promised Financial Statement later this month to follow the period of mourning. Parliament should return earlier from the planned Conference break to scrutinise and approve measures commensurate with the scale of the challenge to business and families posed by the prices of gas and electricity. Business is suffering now with no protection in place against the surges in energy prices.

The Queen

The sad end of the Queen's life will be felt by us all. She has been our Queen all through our lives, a source of stability and a well known presence at our great national events.

Over seventy years of peace and rising national prosperity the Queen brought many subtle changes to the monarchy. She judged the evolving moods and attitudes of the nation. She quietly modernised the way the monarchy works and how we can relate to it. As the titled head of a class conscious society in the 1950s, proximity to the court underwrote that culture. 70 years later the monarchy is more accessible to a diverse range of people with more relaxed attitudes to etiquette.

She lived for service to her nation, for her family and for the animals and sports that helped enrich her life. Our longest reigning monarch, she ranks

alongside Victoria as a long serving Queen who helped create the spirit of an era. The U.K. modernising and rebuilding after the world war was self consciously the nation of the new Elizabethans. Our Queen throughout her seventy years stayed safely above politics and contentious opinions, the only way to ensure a constitutional monarchy flourishes.

The nation has lost its foremost diplomat and representative. She led the growth and work of the Commonwealth. Everywhere she went and in every country where had a role she created good will and graced many formal and entertaining events. I send my condolences to the royal family who have lost a mother, grandmother and great grandmother.

Constitutional monarchy

The Queen's success rested on her firm understanding of the principles of constitutional monarchy in a democratic state. She took seriously her leading role in the great occasions of each year and of her reign.

Every year saw her distribution on Maundy Thursday in spring, her Remembrance day acts so we do not forget all those who gave their lives in war, Trooping the colour in summer and her unifying Christmas message. There was the annual rhythm of the sporting events she liked to attend and time spent in Balmoral and Norfolk outside London.

The reign brought us royal weddings and state funerals, Jubilee celebrations and one off events from the Olympics to World Cup competitions where she would play her part. She hosted Heads of State visiting from abroad and travelled to many countries as our leading Ambassador.

She opened Parliament and set out the government's plans in the Queen's speech from the throne. Written in neutral language it is heard in silence by all parties. MPs then return to the Commons to debate it, support or criticise it, putting living politics into the measured plain prose of the original.

Her success in avoiding political controversy was absolute. She did not find herself in papers based on leaks of partisan or one sided views she was alleged to have let slip in private because she did not allow herself such views. In conversation she was brilliant at being interested in whoever she spoke to without letting slip a viewpoint of her own that some would disagree with and think too political. She did ask the occasional question that made the news, as when she asked why the economic experts had not foreseen the coming economic crash in 2008. She spoke for most of the country when she asked that.

My interventions to the Prime Minister and the Business Secretary during the debate on UK Energy Costs

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): Does the Prime Minister agree that we are too short of energy but have plenty of taxes, and that if we had an over-supply of taxes, as the Labour party wants, we would have less supply of the things we were taxing?

Elizabeth Truss, The Prime Minister: My right hon. Friend makes an extremely good point. The reality is that we cannot tax our way to growth. The policy that I am setting out today is all about helping people with their energy costs, as I promised, and making sure that we have the long-term energy supplies that we need for our country.

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): Would the Business Secretary like to remind the House that the Republic of Ireland deliberately chose much lower corporation tax rates than the rest of the advanced world and collects a far bigger proportion of its economy in taxes on business than we do?

Jacob Rees-Mogg, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: My right hon. Friend will be glad to note that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, from a sedentary position, is agreeing with him. My right hon. Friend is a higher authority on this than I am, but we know that the cut in corporation tax led to an increase in receipts. Higher taxation is not the answer.

Looking at the long term, we must fix our broken energy system. We must have energy independence and become a net exporter of energy by 2040. We cannot be held captive by volatile global markets or malevolent states. We must tackle the root causes of the problems in our energy market by boosting domestic supply. We will invest in renewable energy with vim and vigour, accelerating the deployment of wind, solar and—particularly exciting, I think—hydrogen technologies. To reassure my right hon. Friend the Member for Pendle (Andrew Stephenson), we will invest in nuclear technologies, which also provide us with cheap and clean electricity.

I note that my hon. Friend the Member for Ynys Môn (Virginia Crosbie) said that her constituency is known as energy island. That is exactly what we need in this country. My hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Richard Graham) noted that not just Ynys Môn but the whole of the United Kingdom is energy island. We must use all the resources available to us, including tidal energy, as my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) said. This is a great opportunity.

[The government's help to people and businesses hit by the energy crisis.](#) [Letter from PM](#)

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THE PRIME MINISTER

8 September 2022

Dear Colleague,

SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND BUSINESSES WITH THEIR ENERGY BILLS

On the steps of Downing Street on Tuesday, I pledged to take action to bring down energy bills. Today, within 48 hours of taking office, I have delivered on that promise.

This Government will bring forward emergency legislation to establish a new Energy Price Guarantee which will ensure that the average British household pays no more than £2,500 per year for their energy bills for the next two years from October.

This will save the average household at least £1,000 per year – giving certainty on energy prices so people can get through the winter, slowing inflation and making incomes go further. We will fully compensate energy suppliers for the cost of this emergency action – with the Chancellor setting out further details in the fiscal statement later this month. The new guarantee will apply to households in Great Britain, with the same level of support made available to households in Northern Ireland.

As part of the Energy Price Guarantee, we are temporarily suspending green levies – contributing £150 to the £1,000 yearly average saving. At this difficult time, it is right that households do not bear the cost of low-carbon electricity generation, but instead benefit from it.

And we will maintain the £400 Energy Bill Support Scheme for everyone, and the £1,200 of support for the most vulnerable households already announced earlier this year.

But I know that not everyone will be eligible for the schemes I have outlined above – especially those living in park homes, or who use heating oil in rural areas in constituencies such as mine. We will set up a discretionary fund to make sure that no one is left behind this winter.

Businesses will be offered an equivalent guarantee for six months for those hit by rising prices, and after those six months we will provide further support for vulnerable sectors, such as hospitality, including our local pubs. We will work with businesses to review where this should be targeted.

But we are also taking action to ensure that we are never in this position again. That means ending decades of short-term thinking which has allowed Putin to weaponise energy supplies as part of his illegal invasion of Ukraine.

We will ramp up energy supply and fix the regulation of our energy market. This will include establishing a new Energy Supply Taskforce, in the style of the Vaccine Taskforce, to negotiate new long-term contracts with suppliers to bring down energy costs.

Together with the Bank of England, we have secured a new £40 billion facility, so energy firms have the liquidity they need to manage volatility in energy markets, stabilising the market, reducing costs for the exchequer, and decreasing the chances of energy companies needing our support.

To fix domestic supply, we have to be bold. I want the UK to be a net energy exporter by 2040.

We will end the moratorium on shale extraction to get gas flowing as soon as six months' time, boost renewables including wind and solar, launch Great British Nuclear later this month, and create a pro-investor environment to get more domestic supply projects off the ground, faster.

A review will be held to fix the longstanding problems within our energy regulation, and we will bring forward fundamental reforms to make our energy market fit for the challenges Britain faces today.

The Rt Hon Member for Kingswood, Chris Skidmore MP, will also lead a review to ensure we deliver net zero by 2050 in a way that is pro-business and pro-growth.

When I took office, I was clear that the next few months would not be easy. But I have every confidence that the resolve of the British people is strong enough to see us through the storm. Today's package sends a clear message that this Government is with them every step of the way.

Yours Sincerely,

All MPs and Peers