

Labour tables targeted amendments to Article 50 Bill

Today

Labour has tabled a number of targeted amendments to the Article 50 Bill (the European Union [Notification of Withdrawal] Bill).

The

amendments seek to improve the process, and would ensure Parliament is able to

hold the Government to account throughout the Brexit negotiations.

Labour

is also tabling an anti-tax haven amendment to ensure the Prime Minister doesn't use Brexit to weaken Britain's laws concerning tax avoidance and evasion.

Labour

will also support two amendments drafted by Melanie Onn MP which would protect

workers' rights and ensure there is no drop in employment protection after the

UK leaves the EU.

Labour's

amendments will:

i)

Allow a meaningful vote in Parliament on the final Brexit deal. **Labour's amendment would ensure that the House of Commons has the first say on any proposed deal** and that the consent of Parliament would be required before the deal is referred to the European Council and Parliament.

ii)

Establish a number of key principles the Government must seek to negotiate during the process, including **protecting workers' rights, securing full tariff and impediment free access to the Single Market.**

iii)

Ensure there is robust and regular Parliamentary scrutiny by requiring the Secretary of State to **report to the House at least every two months** on the progress being made on negotiations throughout the Brexit process

iv)

Guarantee legal rights for EU nationals living in the UK. Labour has repeatedly called for the Government to take this step, and this amendment would ensure EU citizens' rights are not part of the Brexit negotiations.

v)

Require the Government to **consult regularly with the governments in Wales,**

Scotland and Northern Ireland throughout Brexit negotiations. Labour's amendment would put the Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) on a statutory footing and require the UK Government to consult the JMC at least every two months.

vi)

Require the Government to **publish impact assessments** conducted since the referendum of any new proposed trading relationship with the EU. This amendment

seeks to ensure there is much greater clarity on the likely impact of the Government's decision to exit the Single Market and seek new relationship with the Customs Union

vii)

Ensure

the Government must **seek to retain all existing EU tax avoidance and evasion measures** post-Brexit

Jeremy

Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party, said:

"Labour

will seek to amend the Article 50 Bill to prevent the Government using Brexit to turn Britain into a bargain basement tax haven off the coast of Europe.

Our

country can do much better than that.

"We

respect the will of the British people, but not the will of this Tory government to impose fewer rights at work and worse public services, while the

largest corporations pay even less tax.

"Labour

will ensure that the British people, through Parliament, have genuine accountability and oversight over the Brexit negotiations because no one voted

to give Prime Minister Theresa May a free hand over our future."

Keir

Starmer, Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the EU, said:

"Now

that Parliament has the right to trigger Article 50, we need to ensure there is

proper grip and accountability built into the process.

"Labour's

amendments will also seek to ensure the Prime Minister secures the best deal for the whole country – including tariff and impediment free access to the Single Market and that there is no drop in workers' rights.

"Labour's

amendments will significantly improve the Government's Bill – in particular by ensuring the House of Commons has the first say on the final Brexit deal and that there are regular opportunities to hold the Government to account.

“Labour's amendments will also seek to ensure the Prime Minister secures the best deal for the whole country – including tariff and impediment free access to the Single Market and that there is no drop in workers' rights. We will also vigorously oppose any plans to reduce powers to tackle tax avoidance or evasion’.

“The Article 50 Bill will be the start, not the end of the Brexit process and Labour will hold the Government to account all the way”

**Melanie
Oonn MP,**

who has tabled two amendments with Frontbench support on workers' rights said:

“The Tories can't be allowed to use Brexit as an excuse to water-down people's rights at work.

“That's why I am introducing amendments to protect in British law all workers' rights which originate from the EU, including maternity pay, equal rights for agency and part-time workers, and the working time directive.

“The British people voted to leave the EU, but I don't think anyone was voting for more insecure contracts or a less safe workplace.”