

Saving lives in the Channel

The government wants to stop people trafficking and smuggling from France. Its Border Force has been unable to carry out the Home Secretary's wishes and deter or turn back the small boats. The government is now legislating to strengthen its powers to send people back who do not qualify as asylum seekers.

I sponsored Bill Cash's amendment to the Bill. We were worried that U.K. courts might refuse to implement the law, claiming that European Human Rights or the UN migrant Convention prevented them from doing so. We proposed a simple amendment to clarify that the U.K. law means what it says notwithstanding any ECHR or UN interpretations.

The government refused to accept the amendment and Opposition parties were against it. The government promised to bring forward proposals to amend the Human Rights laws urgently, implying they agreed with our fears concerning this Bill.

It is a pity they did not just accept the amendment. The danger now is the courts will seek to undermine government borders policy yet again.