

The Queen's speech

We are getting through the traditional Queen's speech debate this week. Normally it sets out what the government will do over the year ahead, specifying which pieces of legislation they will pass. The Speech also highlights any major events of the diplomatic year, telling us about State visits. It does not go into detail about budgets, departmental spending plans or the day to day business of government.

This Queen's speech debate is like no other I have participated in for one very simple reason. The government advancing it has no majority. Every item in it needing Parliamentary approval will require some opposition MPs to vote for it.

In the debate yesterday I asked the representative of the SNP what they would support amongst the list of Bills in the Speech. None seemed to be the answer. Labour has been a bit more helpful, liking the Domestic Abuse Bill.

There is no point in this Parliament continuing unless sufficient Opposition MPs agree to vote for some of the bills in the Speech. Short of any opposition support the legislative programme is a fantasy list, a list of Bills a future Conservative government would like to put through given a majority to do so.

The present Parliament has substantial negative capability, but is unwilling to come together to achieve anything. That is why we need a General election.