

Labour needs to abolish the hereditary peers

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This morning, I published the second in my series on what Labour might do now that it is in office for almost no cost at all. In it, I argue that the 92 remaining hereditary peers in the House of Lords are a historical anachronism that preserves privilege for the aristocracy when that should have been gone long ago. It is time for them to go.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ISBIsy741o>

The audio version of this video is here:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=5m4bx-16632eb-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=c73a3a&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=ff6d00

The transcript is:

Labour needs to abolish the hereditary peers in the House of Lords.

It does, of course, need to abolish the House of Lords as a whole, and it has said it will do that. But I do recall that this was on the agenda of Tony Blair's government in 1997 and nothing happened, and I fear that Keir Starmer is going to be in much the same place. There's always going to be something better to do than abolish the House of Lords.

However, he could get rid of the hereditary peers. There are 92 peers - Lords or Baronesses - who sit in the House of Lords because their fathers were peers. They are

there purely because of family privilege passed down the line from some predecessor of theirs who was appointed probably a very long time ago to sit in the House of Lords for reasons that, well, let's be totally honest, we might best want to forget.

Why should they still have a part to play in the creation of legislation in this country?

Why should such privilege be respected still when there is no reason to presume that they are any better than any other person in any other street in the UK to sit in that place? Because frankly, they're probably not.

So, if Keir Starmer wants to send out a clear message to this country, that he believes that everyone is equal, that everyone should have a chance, that everyone should take their place in society without fear of being prejudiced by privilege, which is what is happening now, then he should abolish those hereditary peers, and do so as soon as possible.

We don't need them. There are already too many peers in the House of Lords anyway, and he will be creating more - he has already done so - to try to rebalance the Labour minority against the Tory majority that already sits in that place. Best to do that by getting rid of those hereditary peers.

Let's abolish privilege for good. Let's get rid of this idea that being born into the aristocracy does somehow give you the right to govern. It doesn't.

Come on Labour, let's do it.