

Reeves and Starmer: loose cannons seeking jobless growth..

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According [to the Guardian](#), Keir Starmer will tell international business leaders today that:

We've got to look at regulation where it is needlessly holding back the investment, to take our country forward.

Where it is stopping us building the homes, the datacentres, warehouses, grid connectors, roads, train lines, you name it then mark my words - we will get rid of it. We will rip out the bureaucracy that blocks investment and we will make sure that every regulator in this country take growth as seriously as this room does.

To contextualise my concern about this comment, let me [also note an FT report that suggests](#):

Business fears big rise in UK national insurance

Quite what the fears of these businesses are - since they appear to be largely stoked by tax advisers and not by business itself - is not clear, but that's not the reason for my concern.

What troubles me is the massive bias against people in these proposals. Labour has claimed it is on the side of 'working people', and, it seems, no one else other than big business, but that has to be in doubt in the light of these announcements and speculations.

To be precise, tearing up regulations is invariably bad for people and the environment. The threat to the environment is apparent in what Starmer is going to say, but that to people is just as real. Working people only enjoy the rights that they have, to fair pay, paid holidays, protection from being sacked, anti-discrimination rules, and so much more because of hard fought for regulation. Any move to weaken that shifts the balance of power away from working people and towards business and that would be a deeply retrograde step that looks to be on the cards.

Then, there is the move on national insurance. If any of the rumours about increased employer's national insurance are true, this is confirmation of another move determinantal to working people - because in a country with a tax system that massively encourages the replacement of people by machines, as we have - then this move will hurt employment.

There is one message coming out of this: what Starmer and Reeves are proposing is jobless growth. Growth, in other words, that despoils our environment and pays little or no return to people but does seek to enslave them in yet more debt to buy the goods made here for which they will not have the income to pay, whilst increasing inequality and division in society.

In summary, this is not a government that looks to be remotely in favour of working people.