

policy news

the Young Fabian digest of the latest policy publications

Welcome to Issue 11 of *Policy News*, brought to you every two months by the Young Fabian executive. *Policy News* brings together ideas from think tanks, Whitehall departments and third sector organisations, providing an outline of recent policy publications and links to their full reports.

2010 being an election year means that the policy world has been in the midst of a battle of competing ideas. Policy organisations on the left and right have been setting out their stall on growth after the recovery, public services reform in an context of fiscal restraint, how to tackle the deficit and what services to cut and why.

In that context this edition of *Policy News* looks at a range of domestic reports on the economic situation. We also have a look foreign affairs and security policy. *Policy News* also has two new features in looking both at a policy papers on Labour Party thinking and the state of social democracy in the UK and beyond. The second brand new feature of *Policy News* is a training of our gaze towards the policies of Labour's opponents in our new 'opposition policy watch' section.

In a General Election year it is vitally important that the Young Fabians should continue to offer ideas to the Labour Party and to deconstruct the policies of our opponents. I hope that you find *Policy News* a useful tool in that endeavour. Please enjoy reading this selection of papers and I hope that you are stirred towards responding to some of them. Please do feel free to pen an article for the Young Fabians blog or for *Anticipations* magazine in response to some of the thinking contained here.

To suggest a publication to include in the next issue of *Policy News* (March-April) or for any other comments, please send an email with full details to the address below. Happy reading.

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DOMESTIC POLICY

1. IPPR

Public Service Reform: The next chapter

IPPR turns its attention to the role citizens and communities can play in directly producing services. In a hot debate set to dominate the election campaign the research looks at citizen responsibility towards society and how this interacts with the role of the state. It sets out the case for community empowerment and examines how this agenda can move from the margins to the mainstream of the policy agenda in the coming months and maybe even years. Interestingly the work is informed by a specially commissioned poll that assessed public attitudes towards greater citizen involvement in and responsibility for delivering our public services.

▶▶ Available at:

<http://www.ippr.org.uk/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=727>

2. BIS and TUC

Union Modernisation Fund

This report summarises the key learning points identified by the Centre for Employment Relations Innovation and Change at the University of Leeds Business School (CERIC) on range of challenges that trades unions face today. It specifically looks at how unions respond to the rapidly changing economic landscape and embark on 'modernisation journeys'. It forms part of the Government and the TUC drive to encourage a debate about the modernisation agenda in the union sector.

▶▶ Available at:

<http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file54376.pdf>

3. Kings Fund

Delivering Better Care at End of Life

The King's Fund respond to the government's End of Life Care Strategy on improving the care that patients receive at the end of their life and to give them meaningful choice about where they are cared for and where they die. In a debate sure to dominate the elections the Kings Fund address the taboo topics of death and dying, recognising that the number of people dying is rising, putting extra pressure on end-of-life care services and in context of tight budgets this makes for interesting reading.

Delivering better care at end of life: the next steps includes papers given at a summit of senior policy-makers, clinicians, managers, officials and academics on issues from commissioning, hospice and hospital care, quality markers, challenges for providers – and an account of the debate generated.

▶▶ Available at:

http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/leeds_castle_eolc.html

4. Social Market Foundation

From Feast to Famine: Reforming the NHS for an age of austerity

Over the past two years the SMF Health project has examined the future of the NHS in the coming decade, in the face of demographic, technological and now economic change. In the context of a crisis in public finances the final report looks again at the sustainability of tax funding, and asks how an equitable health system can be safeguarded in the years ahead. The report examines whether new measures should be taken to manage demand for health services to relieve pressure on the NHS.

Following the consecutive increases in under Labour the NHS now faces the need to adjust to the lean times ahead. This report explores the possibilities of a political shift away from the idea of a uniform National Health Service towards an acceptance of locally varied, diverse provision.

▶▶ Available at:

<http://www.smf.co.uk/assets/files/Health%20Report%20From%20Feast%20to%20Famine.pdf>

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY

1. Ministry of Defence: Green Paper Adaptability and Partnership: Issues for the Strategic Defence Review

The Government has committed to holding a Strategic Defence Review immediately after the next election. It has also committed to examining what role we want the United Kingdom to play in the world and how much the nation is prepared to pay for security and defence. This Green Paper does not attempt to answer that fundamental question. Once again in the light of fiscal restraint this Green paper opens discussion on being more tied to the security to that of our allies and "*increase defence cooperation with our international partners to deliver defence more efficiently and effectively.*"

►► Available at:

http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/790C77EC-550B-4AE8-B227-14DA412FC9BA/0/defence_green_paper_cm7794.pdf

2. Foreign Policy Centre: Kazakhstan at a Crossroads: Human Rights and Democracy

2010 stands as a landmark year in the history of Kazakhstan and for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). It will be the first time a Central Asian nation takes the leadership role of a major international political organisation, but also Kazakhstan will be the first non-democracy to become the OSCE's Chairman-in-Office. Kazakhstan will be under the international spotlight to an extent it has not seen since independence. Against that backdrop the Foreign Policy Centre is publishing papers assessing a number of key issues in Kazakhstan that will be followed by a pamphlet. This is the first paper and focuses on human rights and democracy

►► Available at:

<http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/1152.pdf>

3. European Council for Foreign Relations: China Shapes its post-crisis economic agenda

China Analysis introduces European audiences to the ongoing debates in China, drawing on published sources and internal strategic thinking. The experts considered in this report seek to decouple the Chinese economy from international demand and analyse both the internationalisation of Chinese currency and China's perceptions of the role of the G20 in global governance.

►► Available at:

http://ecfr.3cdn.net/fb7c185061a2f381da_46m6be8uy.pdf

LABOUR PARTY AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

1. Policy Network: Olaf Cramme, Patrick Diamond and Roger Liddle

Challenging the politics of evasion: the only way to renew European social democracy

This collection of Policy Network authors argue that modern social democracy is suspended between embarrassment and complacency. They argue that most of the left in Europe has been guilty of what can be described as the "*politics of evasion*". Meaning we have failed to confront the fundamental causes of our electoral vulnerability and loss of trust with our voters. This paper offers a candid assessment of the centre-left's current predicament, setting out a path for a period of ideological renewal.

►► Available at:

[http://www.policy-network.net/uploadedFiles/Publications/Publications/The%20politics%20of%20evasion\(3\).pdf](http://www.policy-network.net/uploadedFiles/Publications/Publications/The%20politics%20of%20evasion(3).pdf)

2. Open Left (at Demos): Edited by James Purnell and Graeme Cooke

We Mean Power: Ideas for the future of the left

Open Left was launched in July 2009 with the simple yet fundamental question: what does it mean to be on the Left today? This collection aims to offer a set of arguments and ideas to help provide an answer. It argues that whatever happens at the election, the centre-Left needs a serious debate about what it stands for and the sort of society it seeks. It is now fifteen years after the revision of Clause IV and over a decade since Labour came to office, so this discussion is both necessary and overdue.

The crux of the argument is in favour of 'powerful people in a reciprocal society'. The articles defend the importance of ideology in politics and shows how the best of Labour's traditions can provide a fertile ground for policy, both for the manifesto and beyond as the political renewal of the centre-Left in this country in the months and years ahead.

►► Available at:

http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Open_left_-_web.pdf?1266489744

3. Compass: Jon Cruddas & Andrea Nahles Building the Good Society: the project of the democratic left

Ten years ago Tony Blair and Gerhard Schroeder produced their declaration of the European third way. To mark this anniversary Compass and counterparts in the SPD in Germany have published a new declaration. It offers an alternative project to build a post- crisis social Europe, and forms the start of a debate across the European centre-left.

▶▶ Available at:

<http://clients.squareeye.com/uploads/compass/documents/good%20society%200english%20WEB.pdf>

OPPOSITION POLICY WATCH

1. The Bow Group: Rt. Hon John Redwood MP and Carl Thomson "More for Less" Cutting Public Spending, Protecting Public Services

This pamphlet looks at the main departmental budgets and identify; what the Government is spending, how much they think they need to cut to balance the books, and finally "*what can be done to deliver greater efficiencies and value for money without harming essential front line public services*". If you believe that, you'll believe anything, but it's worth a read.

▶▶ Available at:

http://www.bowgroup.org/harriercollectionitems/Final_Draft_of_Redwood-Thomson_CPS_pamphlet1.pdf

2. The Centre for Policy Studies: Michael Forsyth and Corin Taylor Cut Taxes Now to Cut Debt

Classic centre right economics, "*The UK economy is in dire straits. We have lost our tax competitiveness. We have no growth.*" is the opening premise. So you know where you stand.

The article argues that the deficit is the biggest problem facing the country and the cure for the deficit will be positive growth. The way to achieve that, you guessed it, "*targeted investments in a programme of tax cuts*".

It calls for:

- The main rate of corporation tax to be reduced to 20%.
- The 50p tax rate for high earners and the phase-out of the personal allowance for earnings above £100,000 should not be introduced.
- Capital gains tax rates should be increased to 20% and 40%; and a ten-year taper rule introduced so that no CGT is payable on longer-term gains.
- Stamp duty on share transactions should be abolished.

It does acknowledge that the cost of implementing the above reforms is estimated to be under £5 billion. Then claims, "*This is a modest sum*". Happy reading.

▶▶ Available at:

http://www.cps.org.uk/cps_catalog/go%20for%20growth%20-%20cut%20taxes%20now%20to%20cut%20debt.pdf

3. Policy Exchange: Anna Fazackerley and Julian Chant More Fees Please?

Anna Fazackerley and Julian Chant argue that the Government must raise the cap on top-up fees. The report argues that in order to avoid a deterioration of quality in the Higher Education sector the Treasury should remove students from the wealthy households from the public student loans scheme and offer them a loan from a regulated private loan scheme at a lower than commercial rate of interest instead. It also predicts that Government student loan debt expected to reach £55 billion by 2018.

▶▶ Available at:

http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/pdfs/PX_More_Fees_Please_WEB.pdf

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